COMING JUNE 25
Lancaster Pride

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MAY & JUNE 2017

'Coming Out' as Conservatives

Transitioned in later life, conservative Republican Gina Roberts spoke to the San Diego GOP meeting right after President Trump's election to the White House.

Conservative Transgender Advocates Defend Their Views

By Frank Pizzoli

They speak their conscience at the intersection of open dialogue among all segments of our diverse community.

"I believe Conservative principles are more closely aligned with the intent of the US Constitution. Conservatism leads to smaller, less invasive government," Gina Roberts says.

Born in 1954 when Eisenhower was president and before a US astronaut circled the earth in a tin can, Roberts transitioned later in life. "I lived a double life for 50 years," she shares. Separated from her second wife, with whom she is "great friends," Roberts, 62, has three children.

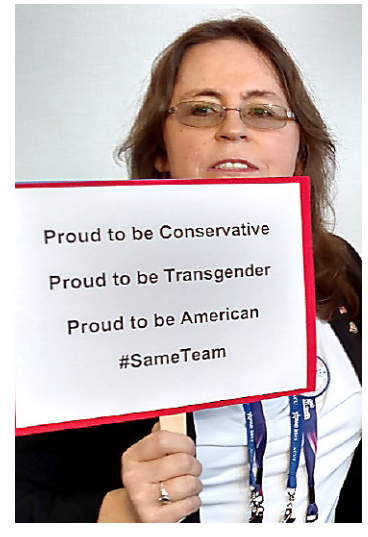
Roberts is chair of the San Diego Log Cabin Republicans, a chapter of the nation's largest gay GOP political organization, and a longtime engineering consultant from Valley Center. Roberts said she underwent her transition surgery just five weeks before she talked with *Central Voice*.

What about President Trump's recent reversal of former President Obama's Executive Order and advisory to school districts on transgender accommodations? Trump said he believed transgender issues were a State's Rights issue.

"Obama's Executive Order was heavy handed. It did not allow local school boards to decide their own policies. You had to follow overly-specific rules or lose Federal funds," Roberts says. Taking away local control of anything is never a good idea, she believes.

Should all civil rights rules be handled as a State's rights issue or only at the local level?

"No. Civil rights issues are absolutely Federal issues. My problem with Obama's executive order is that he was too proscriptive, not allowing for local solutions. "I think transgender rights need to be considered civil rights," Roberts said. "Would you require black people to use separate bathrooms?"



Transgender conservative activist Jennifer Williams at February's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC).

Is the transgender community over-reacting to recent developments?

"Everyone is over-reacting. No one is communicating," Roberts says. She told the *LA Times* "I've been using the bathroom for 35 years for the gender I presented, and I'm not exactly a small person who isn't noticed. I've never had a problem."

Continued on page 23

Can you feel it in the air?

Pride Season is Here!

The time when the midstate celebrates freedom and love and self-respect.

Lancaster Pride: June 25
Central PA Pride in Harrisburg: July 29
York Equality Fest: August 6

Lancaster's Pride Guide inside: pages 13-16

INSIDE ▸ THE ROAD TO PRIDE pgs 12 ▸ ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT pgs 8-11

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Political Updates

INTERNATIONAL

• UK: Marriage Mess Heads for Supreme Court

Charles Keidan and Rebecca Steinfeld, a British couple, have lost their High Court challenge to a law that restricts civil partnerships to gay couples. The couple from London challenged a ruling that they did not meet the legal requirement for the partnership because they are not the same sex. The case is the latest in a long-running debate in the UK over the definition of marriage. Initially, Prime Minister Tony Blair brought in Civil Partnerships Act in 2004 as a uniquely gay union, away from religious institutions and specifically avoiding the word "marriage."

• Cuba: Castro's Daughter Pushes Pro-LGBT laws

The daughter of Cuban President Raúl Castro on Wednesday said there is a "legislative package" that would extend rights to LGBT Cubans. Diario de Cuba, an independent website that is blocked in Cuba, reported Mariela Castro, who is director of the country's National Center for Sexual Education, did not provide specific details when she spoke to reporters at her organization's headquarters in Havana's Vedado neighborhood. Mariela Castro said the Cuban National Assembly could consider the package once they approve proposed constitutional reforms, which Diario de Cuba said could take place in 2017.

• Brazil: Marriage Equality Bill Passed 17-0

Legal rulings by the Supreme Federal Tribunal and the National Council of Justice created marriage equality in Brazil in 2003 but now politicians appear ready to put it in the Civil Code. That's always a good move. A marriage-equality bill passed the Senate's Constitution and Justice Committee 17 to 0 with 1 abstention. It changes "man and woman" in marriage laws to "two persons."

NATIONAL

• Civil Rights Law Prohibits LGBT Discrimination

A federal appeals court ruled for the first time that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects LGBT employees from workplace discrimination, setting up a likely battle before the Supreme Court as gay rights advocates push to broaden the scope of the 53-year-old law. The 8-to-3 decision by the full 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago comes just three weeks after a three-judge panel in Atlanta ruled the opposite, saying employers aren't prohibited from discriminating against employees based on sexual orientation. The case stems from a lawsuit by Indiana teacher Kimberly Hively alleging that the Ivy Tech Community College in South Bend didn't hire her full time because she is a lesbian.
In an opinion concurring with the majority, Judge Richard Posner wrote that changing norms call for a change in interpretation of the Civil Rights Act, which bars discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin or sex.

• Center For Underserved LGBT Care Expands

Callen-Lorde Community Health Center announces plans to address the growing healthcare needs of New York City's LGBTQ communities by expanding its services into Brooklyn beginning in 2019. The agency has signed a 20-year lease for a space at 40 Flatbush Avenue Extension in Downtown Brooklyn. The lease will allow Callen-Lorde to serve a greater number of people in the city, building on its current operations in Manhattan and the Bronx. The organization continues to be a leader in meeting the healthcare needs of LGBTQ and underserved communities, including those living with HIV. Callen-Lorde is the global leader in LGBTQ healthcare. Since the days of Stonewall, Callen-Lorde has been transforming lives by providing a welcoming environment for LGBTQ communities to get quality care, free of judgment and regardless of ability to pay. The first LGBTQ-centric healthcare provider, Callen-Lorde is widely recognized for its innovative HIV and transgender care.

• PA Bar Opposes Services Funding Elimination

Pennsylvania Bar Association President Sara A. Austin issued the following statement about President Donald Trump's proposed budget that would eliminate funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC): "The Pennsylvania Bar Association is joining with bar leaders from across the country in speaking out against President Trump's proposal to cut all funding to LSC. LSC, the single largest funder of civil legal aid in the country, provided nearly $12 million to Pennsylvania's civil legal services organizations in 2016. Cutting funding for this vital program essentially denies equal access to justice and risks the well-being of many vulnerable residents in every corner of our state.
Low-income Pennsylvanians have access to legal services thanks to grants made possible in part through the federal appropriation to LSC. Among those who receive legal help are low-income people who are victims of disasters, who are wrongfully evicted from homes, who are trying to escape domestic violence, and who are trying to gain education for special needs children."

• Doctor Refuses Treatment to Lesbian's Baby

A Michigan pediatrician declined to treat the infant daughter of a lesbian couple in yet another example of the growing tensions between advocates for LGBT rights and those who want greater religious expression protections.
Krista and Jami Contreras were eager to bring their 6-day-old infant for her first doctor visit after her birth in October. The doctor that they had carefully chosen knew they were lesbians and after the first prenatal visit, they were under the impression that everything was fine. But the morning they arrived for the appointment after baby Bay's birth, another doctor in the practice greeted them instead. "The first thing Dr. Karam said was, 'I'll be your doctor, I'll be seeing you today because Dr. Roi decided this morning that she prayed on it and she won't be able to care for Bay,' " Jami told WJBK. "Dr. Karam told us she didn't even come to the office that morning because she didn't want to see us." The incident has raised valid questions about whether Roi's actions were justified, ethical or even legal.

• OK's Historic Stand Against Discrimination

Twenty-five Oklahoma State Senators took a historic stand against anti-LGBTQ discrimination when SB 694 and SB 197 were both called onto the floor for a vote. The former bill would have stripped employment and public accommodation protections form municipalities around the state, the later was a North Carolina "license to discriminate" bill. After Senator Brecheen's SB 694 was voted down in resounding fashion, Senator Silk pulled SB 197, as he knew it would fail by a greater margin.

• Prayers for Transgender Justice

Recently leaders, clergy, and people of faith from more than 130 congregations in more than 30 states participated in the National Weekend of Prayer for Transgender Justice. They dedicated their weekly services and/or holding special events to support transgender people across America who continue to lack full legal protection, face unequal treatment, and experience disproportionate levels of violence, harassment, and discrimination. "As people of faith and conscience, we oppose the use of religion to harm transgender people, and we recognize our responsibility to articulate a different moral vision," said Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey, President and CEO of the Religious Institute, the organization coordinating the National Weekend of Prayer. "We believe that 'religious freedom' means the freedom to practice our faith, not deny other people their rights or impose our beliefs on others. We know that gender is a complex and sacred gift, and that the breathtaking diversity of Creation is to be honored, not questioned or denied. We know that gender diversity has played a role in faith traditions and religious texts dating back centuries, and that transgender people serve as faith leaders in many traditions and bring forward powerful spiritual gifts."

• Seattle Urges Congress to Approve Equality Act

Seattle City Council unanimously approved a resolution urging Congress to introduce and adopt "The Equality Act," which would grant equal protection to LGBTQ residents across the US. Currently, individual states are able to deny access to housing, employment, education, public accommodations, and more because of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. The Equality Act would set a national standard that fully prohibits discrimination under the law based on gender identity or expression.
The legislation was developed in partnership with LGBTQ Allyship, the Gender Justice League, Seattle LGBTQ Commissioners, and LGBTQ equality advocate Richard Noble. The resolution states, "we find that federal laws that fully prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression are essential to furthering the well-being of the residents of and visitors to Seattle." Seattle joins with other cities calling for adoption of the Equality Act, including Boston and Palm Springs.

Continued on page 6

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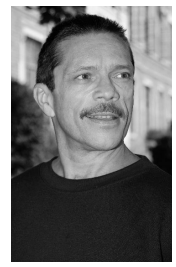
> *One thing the gay rights movement taught the world is the importance of being visible.*
> *- Charles M. Blow*

Get Offline and Into the Streets



Frank Pizzoli

Get offline and into the streets. Swear off political porn web sites. No more armchair activism. Make a trend. Don't follow one. That's what making change requires. Always has.

Stonewall was in the street. ACT UP was in the street. Marches by women and their supporters the day after President Trump's inauguration were in the street. Town halls are public events. We cannot disarm hate from a distance.

The region offers readers three opportunities to get out there.

June 25 is Lancaster Pride. *(See pages 13-16)*

July 29 is Central PA Pride Festival. Look for our official Pride Guide inserted into the July-August issue.

August 6 is York's Equality Festival, a Guide to that event also within the pages of our July-August issue.

Some locations around the country are redirecting their annual parades and celebrations into protests. So far, the Trump administration has removed the LGBT community from the collection of data in the national census. North Carolina rejiggered a law that still allows for ant-gay discrimination. Pennsylvania still has no basic civil rights protections for gay taxpayers.

If marriage was your issue, you'll be fine (unless you're refused service because of who you love). Then there's the rest of the community. The effort needed now surpasses clicking "Like" and thinking you've taken a bold step. Getting out into the street is a bold step. Crossing the street at that Intersection of Diversity within the Movement is a bold step.

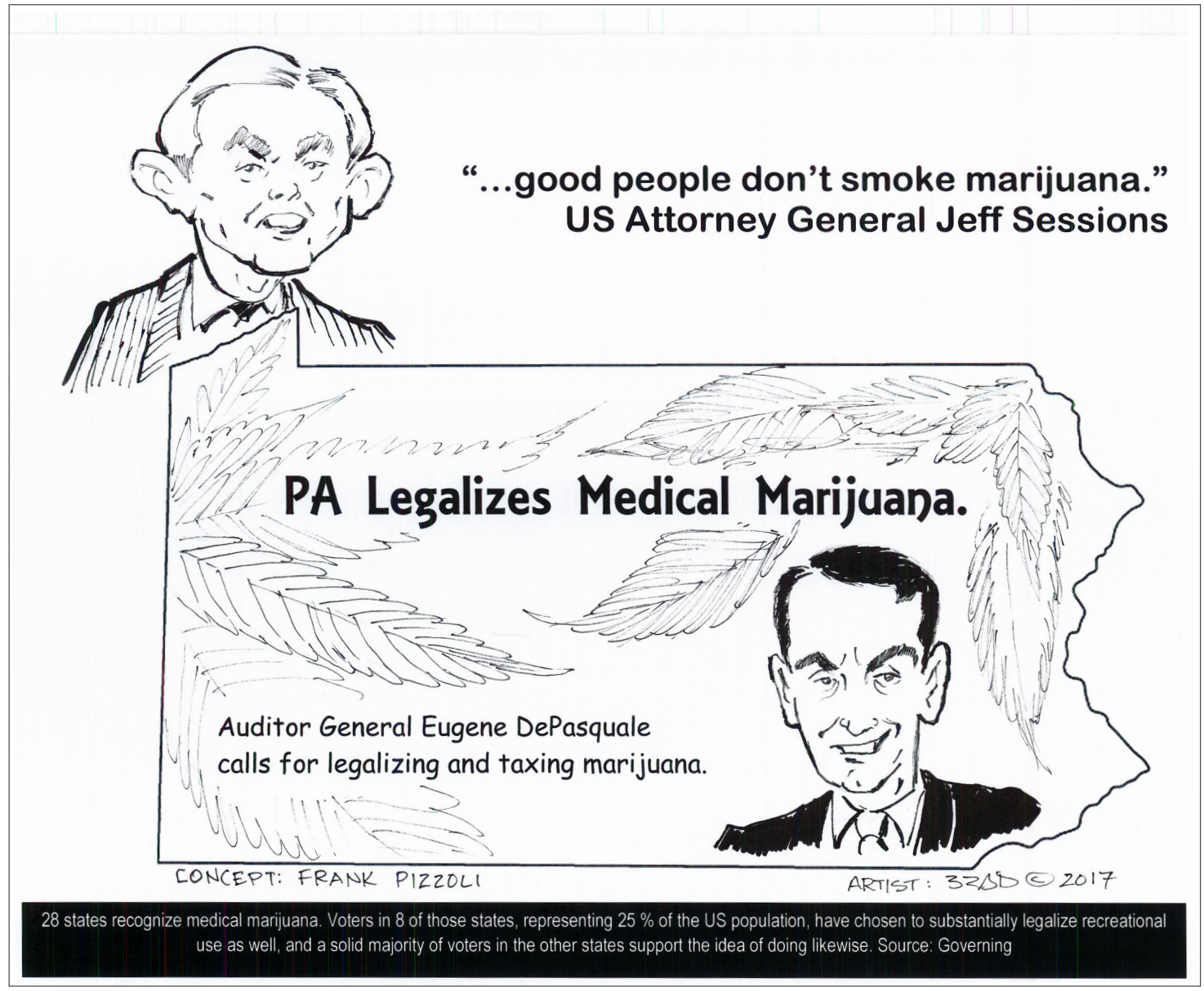
There's a National March in the works for June 11 in Washington, DC, organized by Brooklyn gay activist David Bruinooge, 42. He was inspired by while he was watching the Women's March on Washington at home on television.

"I was watching the events unfold on TV and I was very proud and inspired by all the women, the strong women in our country who were kind of taking this to the street and getting their voices heard," he told the *Washington Blade*. "And in the back of my mind as an openly gay man. I thought the gay community should be doing something like this to follow up on the momentum," he said.

We should be doing something.

Think about attending Creating Change 2018 in Washington, DC. *Central Voice* was a Media Sponsor for 2017 when the event drew 4,000 to Philadelphia this year.

Challenge yourself (gently). Challenge others (gently). Change is *our* job. No one else's.


"...good people don't smoke marijuana."
US Attorney General Jeff Sessions
PA Legalizes Medical Marijuana.
Auditor General Eugene DePasquale
calls for legalizing and taxing marijuana.
CONCEPT: FRANK PIZZOLI
ARTIST: BRAD © 2017
28 states recognize medical marijuana. Voters in 8 of those states, representing 25 % of the US population, have chosen to substantially legalize recreational use as well, and a solid majority of voters in the other states support the idea of doing likewise. Source: Governing

State Dems Stand Up Against Radical Agenda

By Central Voice

"Pennsylvanians are standing up and speaking out against the radical agenda that is being pushed in Washington," Sinceré Harris tells *Central Voice*. She is Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party.

Harris says the party apparatus is "organizing at the grassroots level to hold GOP Congressmen accountable for their lack of town halls, supporting Paul Ryan's disastrous GOP health care plan, and standing up to President Trump's reckless behavior.

President Trump and the Republican Party's priorities, Harris says, "lie with protecting Wall Street, big corporations, and the 1%."

"We focused on the crucial judicial races in 2017, which will have serious implications for statewide and legislative races in 2018," Harris says.

President Trump and the Republican Party's priorities, Harris says, "lie with protecting Wall Street, big corporations, and the 1%."

We'll continue to reach out to all Pennsylvanians who believe in inclusion, economic fairness, and making sure that anyone that works hard can get ahead.

Regarding LGBT civil rights issues, Harris says "Gov. Wolf has made it clear that he wants non-discrimination legislation in employment, housing, and public accommodations, and the party has always been supportive of these non-discrimination laws."

When North Carolina passed anti-gay House Bill 2, Gov. Wolf said he would not sign similar legislation. U.S Sen. Bob Casey is committed to getting non-discrimination passed at the Federal level.

Non-discrimination laws have been proposed by several Democratic legislators, "but the GOP-controlled House and Senate refuses to move on these issues," she says. "This is why it is imperative that we win control of more seats in the State House and State Senate in 2018 and beyond."

PA Dems Executive Director Sinceré Harris

voice box

TRIBUTE
What a beautiful tribute you've given Steve Kozokas. I'm sure his partner, family and friends will be very pleased.

Terry Drew Karanen, *Central Voice* columnist

THANK YOU
Just wanted to thank you for doing the story about the Animal Advocates (March-April 2017). We can't wait to start tabling again this spring and will definitely be at York's Equality Fest again.

Adrienne, Animal Advocates of South Central PA

THOUGHTS
Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on regulations for transgender school students. *(Read, "Transgender School Guidelines" page 25)*

Julie Berry, Board of Directors,TransCentralPA

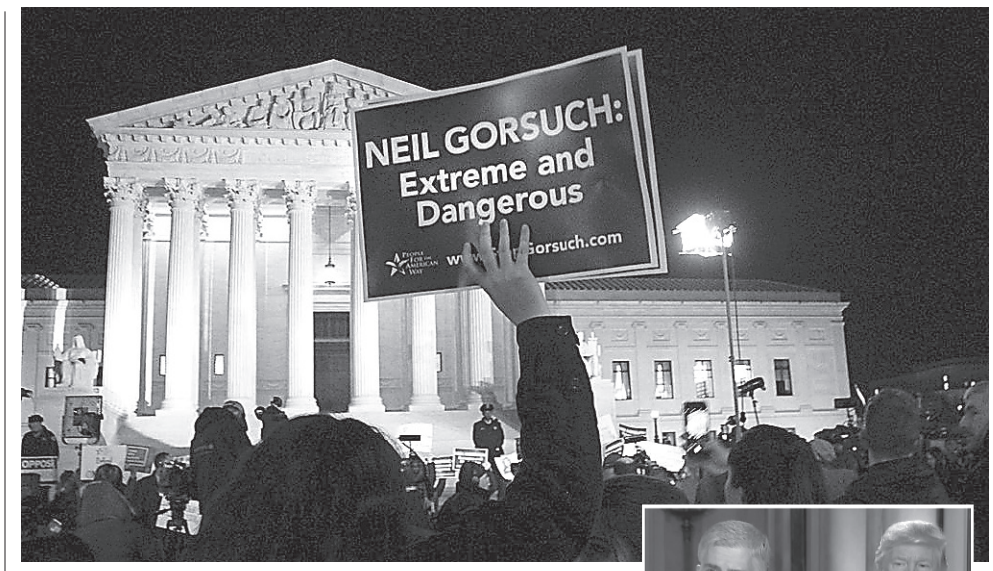
STORY
Thank you for being interested in our story and for your own activism in Pennsylvania all these years.

Jennifer Williams, Transgender CPAC attendee
(Editor: Giving a voice to all stories is the goal of journalism.)

SHAMELESS SELF PROMOTION
Frank, you never fail to display so much sensitivity, intelligence and consideration in all you do. You inspire many of us with your thoughtfulness.

A media colleague, Washington, DC

E-mail your thoughts to posops@aol.com



President Trump nominated Neil Gorsuch to fill Antonin Scalia's seat on the Supreme Court. Justice Gorsuch, sworn in on April 10, vowed to be a "faithful servant of the Constitution and the laws of this great nation." Below is his record compiled by the Alliance For Justice.

The Gorsuch Record on LGBTQ Rights

ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE

Access to Justice

Before joining the Justice Department, Neil Gorsuch wrote a *National Review Online* commentary that showed harsh disdain for those seeking to use the courts to enforce their rights under the law. Among others, he criticized lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Americans who have relied on federal courts in their quest for recognition of equal rights like marriage equality.

He attacked "American liberals" for what he said was an overreliance on litigation to advance "their social agenda on everything from gay marriage to assisted suicide to the use of vouchers for private-school education."

Corporations as People

Judge Gorsuch has a long-held philosophy of favoring corporations and special interests over everyday Americans, including LGBTQ people. This was demonstrated when he sided with the Tenth Circuit majority in *Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc. v. Sebelius*.

The *Hobby Lobby* rationale, that corporations are people and can claim religious rights, has been used to discriminate against LGBTQ people in another case, called *EEOC v. R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, Inc*. In this case, a funeral home was allowed to fire a transgender woman, after she announced her gender transition, claiming she violated the dress code by wearing women's clothes instead of men's attire.

Transgender Rights

Judge Gorsuch sided with an employer who banned a transgender woman, Rebecca Kastl, from using the women's restroom until she could prove she had undergone specific surgery procedures as part of her transition, and then declined to renew her teaching contract.

The court's view in *Kastl v. Maricopa County Community College District*, citing the college's declared "safety reasons" for banning Kastl from the bathroom, was firmly rejected by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in a different case.

The topic made headlines when the Trump administration rolled back anti-discrimination guidelines that prohibited such bans on transgender students using appropriate restroom facilities. A case on the issue is to come before the Supreme Court in March.

Denial of Medical Care

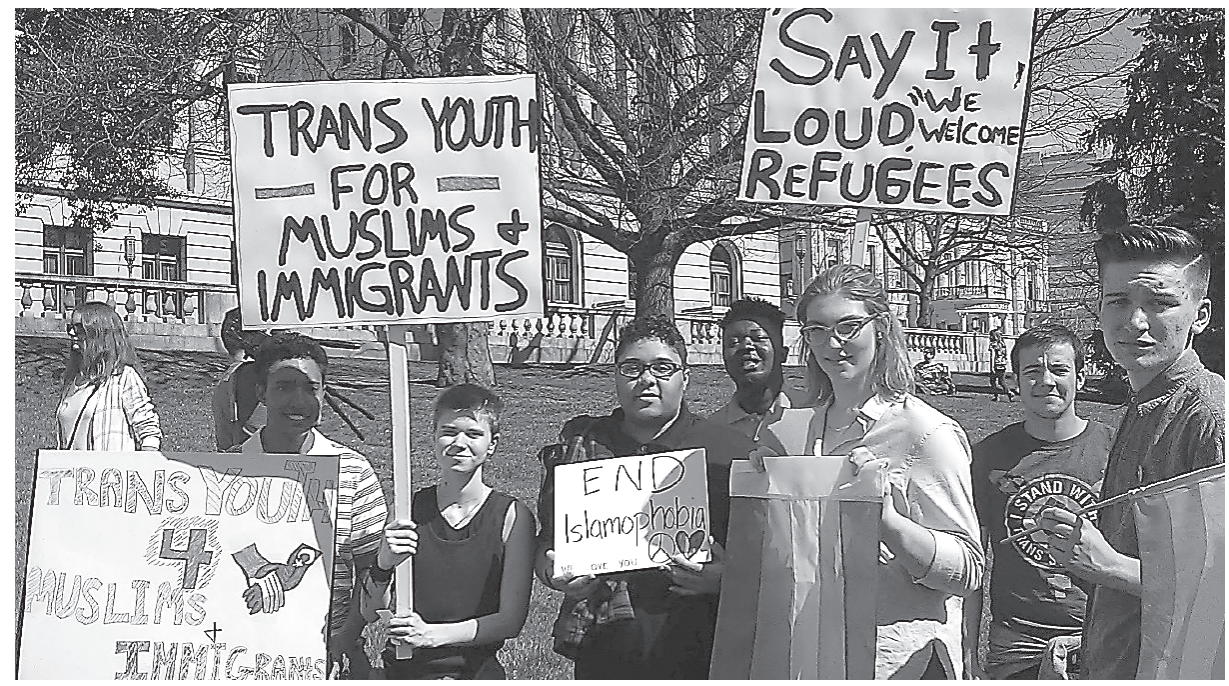
Judge Gorsuch demonstrated his skepticism of LGBTQ claims in another case, *Druley v. Patton*. With fellow judges, he rejected a claim by Jeanne Marie Druley, a state prisoner in Oklahoma, that her constitutional rights were violated when she was denied medically necessary hormone treatment and the ability to wear feminine clothing. In similar cases, other federal courts have reached the opposite conclusion.

A thorough review of his record shows that Judge Gorsuch's view of the Constitution is one that would take our nation backward to an earlier era where LGBTQ Americans and others have fewer rights and legal protections.

Rally Supports Muslim and Immigrant Communities

About 200 people marched through the streets of Harrisburg to the Capitol steps April 9 in support of the region's Muslim and immigrant communities. Speakers included elected officials, political candidates, and advocates. Participants included members of the local transgender community.

Photo by Central Voice



Political Updates *continued from page 3*

• Colorado's Transgender Birth Certificate Act

One Colorado, the state's advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Coloradans and their families, released the following statement from Executive Director Daniel Ramos on the passage of the Birth Certificate Modernization Act by the Colorado House of Representatives. "Today's bipartisan vote to pass the Birth Certificate Modernization Act brings us closer to eliminating one of the many unfair barriers that transgender Coloradans face every day. House Bill 1122 will make the process less burdensome for transgender Coloradans trying to update the gender on their birth certificate by matching our state's law to current federal policies for updating the gender on a passport or Social Security card. "Forcing transgender people to have surgery and prove their gender to a court fails to protect their safety and privacy, can cause significant psychological trauma, and creates cost barriers. This is the third time this bill has been heard in the Colorado Legislature. It is time that the Birth Certificate Modernization Act receives a fair committee assignment in the Senate, so that transgender Coloradans can live their lives openly and honestly."

• CO Republicans Kill Ban on Conversion Therapy

A Colorado senate committee — for the third year in a row — killed a bill that would protect LGBTQ young people by banning the dangerous and discredited practice of conversion therapy. One Colorado, the state's advocacy organization for gay Coloradans released the following statement from Political Director, Laura "Pinky" Reinsch, on the defeat of this House Bill 1156. "Today, Republicans on the Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee had yet another chance to do right by LGBTQ young people in our state. Instead — for the third year in a row — legislators have chosen politics over banning a harmful, discredited, and dangerous practice that attempts to change their sexual orientation or gender identity. "This bill would have safeguarded LGBTQ minors from being subjected to harmful and abusive practices trying to change who they are or who they love. LGBTQ young people who undergo this so-called "therapy" are proven to be at risk of long-term depression, guilt, rejection, and even a heightened risk for suicide." "Despite the fact nearly all of the leading mental health organizations in the country, and in Colorado, reject the practice of conversion therapy, the Republican members of the committee chose to disregard science and the heartbreaking, emotional stories of those who came to testify in support of the ban."

• Activists Arrested at Christian Conference

Members of Soulforce, a social justice organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) people by challenging the Religious Right, was arrested last night in an act of civil and spiritual disobedience at the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) Proclaim conference. The NRB conference brings together several thousand Christian communicators and the businesses, like Facebook, that cater to them to discuss messaging strategies, media deregulation, and "religious liberty." The latter is a catch-all phrase for the anti-LGBTQI, Islamophobic, and anti-Woman rhetoric that the organization and its members espouse in countries around the world. The police presence was intense throughout the day; security personnel and police worked together to track the Soulforce members as they simply walked from one part of the hotel to the other. Eventually, arrests of the protestors took place.

• Florida LGBT Advocates Find Republican Allies

Activists who support new civil rights protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Floridians have found key allies in Republican lawmakers — but their cause still faces challenges in a deeply conservative state Capitol. Fifteen GOP lawmakers have publicly signed onto legislation this session that would ban discrimination against LGBT people in employment, housing, restaurants and other businesses, bucking a party whose national platform in 2016 opposed gay marriage. "I believe that people should be treated equally in our country," said state Rep. Rene Plasencia, R-Orlando, who sponsored legislation banning discrimination. "This is just another step in making sure everybody has equality. Whether it's in the workforce, in housing, in any aspect of our lives, there's no reason why we shouldn't have equality."

• SD Gov. Signs Religious Adoption Protections

South Dakota joined three other states that have enacted laws giving broad legal protections to faith-based organizations that refuse based on their religious beliefs to place children in certain households. Before signing the bill, Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard said he was concerned private child-placement agencies acting in the best interest of a child could be subject to a lawsuit when denying placement to someone in a "protected class," such as members of the LGBT community. He hopes the legislation would forestall that. Jim Kinyon, executive director of South Dakota's Catholic Social Services, has said that the legislation attempts to ensure the state doesn't discriminate against faith-based organizations for their "sincerely held" beliefs. Legislatures in Alabama, Texas and Oklahoma are considering similar "religious exemption" bills this year but only South Dakota's as approved it.

• Arkansas Court Strikes Down LGBT Protections

The Arkansas Supreme Court struck down a city's ordinance banning discrimination based on a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, but it stopped short of saying whether a state law aimed at prohibiting such local LGBT protections is constitutional. Fayetteville, a liberal enclave in northwestern Arkansas, is one of several cities that approved local protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in response to the 2015 law. Arkansas' civil rights law doesn't cover sexual orientation or gender identity. In the unanimous ruling, justices rejected the argument that Fayetteville and other cities that have enacted such ordinances have made that the protections are covered elsewhere in state law.

LGBT community center coalition

By Louie Marven
Executive Director

Students lead efforts toward support at Messiah College

When I was a student at Messiah College in Grantham, PA just over ten years ago, there was not very much visible LGBTQ student life on campus.

At the time, students knew about the website gayatmessiah.org, which had a list of local resources that students might want to access, and testimonials from LGBTQ alumni and allies. I remember hearing murmurs about how people in admissions had to answer uncomfortable questions about the site from concerned parents of prospective students, since it usually came up at the top of a Google search for the college. It was scandalous.

There were two male students who I knew to be dating each other, but it was not something that the broad campus community knew about. The couple did not touch in front of other students. It was written into the student handbook that "homosexual behavior" was not allowed, even though it was not completely clear what that meant, and what the consequences would be for whatever behavior fit into that nebulous category. I was very much in the closet.

It was unimaginable for there to be a student club geared toward supporting LGBTQ students on campus, whether it be a gay-straight alliance (GSA), a queer student union (QSU), or a sexuality and gender alliance (SAGA) as they are commonly known on other campuses. But student-led advocacy over the last few years has resulted in the development of some progress for LGBTQ students -- just not quite a student club.

For the last couple years, there has been a public-facing group known as Messiah College Allies, and an underground group aptly named The Underground. Students have found ways to support one another without an official student club, very much mirroring how LGBTQ people throughout history have learned to survive and create communities in the face of overt and covert discrimination and bigotry.

This year, students applied to have an official club on campus. They did not get a club, but they did get a new program called SAGE, or Sexuality and Gender Education. This program will provide educational opportunities on LGBTQ topics, support for LGBTQ students, and even paid student positions. Students on campus seem happy with this progress, and because of that, I feel happy too.

At the same time, this sort of belabored compromise is in keeping with a long tradition of placating LGBTQ students and their allies, and because of that I remain cynical. What kind of support is the college really providing if students can't even have an official club? I imagine that "education" and "support" will mean something different to administrators than to LGBTQ students. Messiah will continue to point out that because this "issue" is "controversial" it needs to be handled with "sensitivity." I translate that as: "we will never really support LGBTQ students, but we want people to think we're nice."

Cynicism (realism?) aside, I am truly proud of current students for moving the ball forward on these topics. It is incredibly difficult to maintain this kind of progress when no formal club is allowed to exist; in a previous era, multiple underground groups were active at the same time without knowing about each other.

It is inspiring to think about the power of coordinated student efforts in the face of discrimination. And when I tell people about the progress that the college is making on LGBTQ topics, I make sure to give all the credit to the students.

The mission of the LGBT Center of Central PA is to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania by providing services through educational, cultural, and community activities that foster wholeness.

Student Issues: History & Transgenders

College students who recently participated in the 11th annual Gay-Straight Alliance Conference shared their most important LGBT issues with Central Voice. The two most frequently mentioned issues were: (1) effective ways for younger activists to learn LGBT history, and (2) the fair treatment of transgender individuals. The event is sponsor by the LGB T Community Center, Harrisburg. Photo by Central Voice

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1950 GREEN AVENUE, WILLIAMSPORT, PA

Colorful Creator of Rainbow Flag Dies

Gilbert Baker, the colorful gay artist and activist who created the iconic rainbow flag, has died. Friends said Baker, 65, died March 30 in his sleep at his home in New York.

Baker's first flag was an eight-colored banner that flew over the 1978 Pride festivities in San Francisco. The rainbow flag has since become a symbol of the LGBT community recognized worldwide — celebrated at pride festivals, brandished at protests and raised every morning at the corner of Castro and Market streets in San Francisco.

Baker told *Central Voice* in 2003 that he never dreamed his creation would evolve into an international symbol. "I wanted to create something joyful," he said.

Baker, a former U.S. Army soldier who taught himself to sew, proposed the rainbow flag at a time when San Francisco's gay and lesbian community was struggling to find a symbol to unite under. He personally rejected other ideas: the pink triangle, a Nazi badge reclaimed by gay activists that Baker found depressing, and the Greek letter lambda, which he deemed too obscure.

The rainbow was joyful, celebratory and inclusive. And it was relatively easy to make and share.

Original 8-stripe version designed by Baker in 1978

Version with hot pink stripe removed due to fabric unavailability (1978-79)

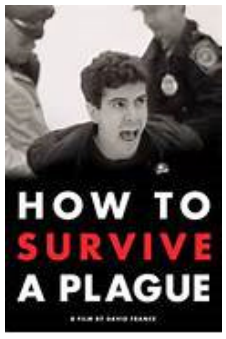
6-color version popular since 1979. Indigo and turquise were change to royal blue.

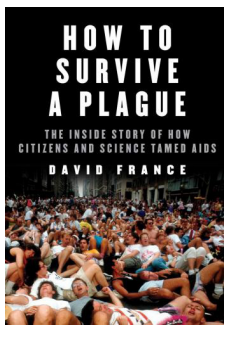
"I wanted to create something joyful."
-Gilbert Baker

The iconic flag originally consisted of eight stripes; Gilbert Baker assigned specific meaning to each of the colors:

How to Survive a Plague

Filmmaker Tells How LGBT Community Organized to Fight AIDS





Movie meme and How to Survive a Plague book cover

By Central Voice

"Our history is important," David France tells *Central Voice*. With many from the AIDS Generation missing, "there's been a gap between Baby Boomers and Millennials and the telling of our stories," he points out.

How to Survive a Plague, first a documentary movie and now a backstory book, France fills in the gap by telling how LGBT Americans organized to fight the spread of AIDS—and the contempt of the government and medical establishments. The film was an Oscar finalist, won a Directors Guild Award and a Peabody Award, and was nominated for two Emmys.

France reminds us of the challenges gay people faced in the age of AIDS, and how we overcame hatred and indifference to save lives. "We urgently need to know their stories. Sixteen million people are alive today thanks to their efforts," says Daily Action Book Club founder Laura Moser.

"It's so easy to get discouraged at a time like this," Moser says. "We want to inspire people to remember how even small groups of activists have helped bend the arc of history toward justice."

The book version of *Plague* is Daily Action Book Club's first title chosen for discussion via an app.

Michael Chapaloney, left, and Frank Pizzoli, right, in a staged reading of The Normal Heart by Larry Kramer, 2001.
Photo by Central Voice

Prominent in the film, *How To Survive A Plague,* is Gay Men's Health Crisis and ACT UP founder Larry Kramer. For the region's second presentation by *Central Voice's* Frank Pizzoli of playwright Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* (the first production was by Lily & Co., and subsequently presented as a staged reading at Open Stage in recent years), Kramer prepared a recorded message for the audience which underscored the importance of ACT UP members as they worked furiously to save lives through advocacy.

One World Trade Center Lights Up on Transgender Day of Visibility

One World Trade Center lit up in Blue, Pink and White March 30 in honor of Transgender Day of Visibility.

TDOV began in 2010 under the guidance of Rachel Crandall as a way to recognize the accomplishments of the trans community and fight obstacles like transphobia, according to Trans Student Educational Resources, a national advocacy organization led entirely by trans youth.

Martha Wash Gives Her Heart & Soul to Hbg Pride

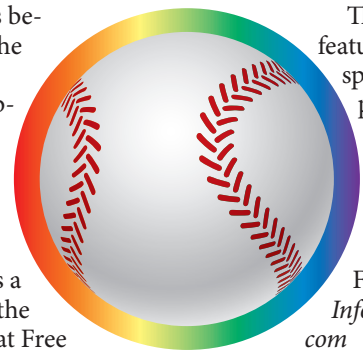
The Pride Festival of Central PA will host the internationally renowned heart and soul of dance music, Martha Wash, a woman whose talent and voice has dominated the airwaves from the days of disco to the present as the 2017 Festival headliner at the 25th Pride Festival of Central PA. Martha having toured and performed with the world's top entertainers and superstars, including RuPaul is best known as half of the magnificent duo, the Weather Girls, who sang the pop cult classic hit, "It's Raining Men". In addition to her work with the Weather girls, Martha's collaboration with Black Box and C&C Music Factory has produced some of the top-selling, most recognizable pop hits of the 80s and 90s. "Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)" the highlight of C&C Music Factory's career, sold 5 1/2 million copies worldwide and Black Box's Dreamland featured four #1 Billboard Dance singles and three Top 40 hits including "Strike It Up", a single that continues to receive massive airplay and is still heard at NFL and NBA games everywhere! Martha recently released a new LP, titled, "Something Good". No stranger to Pride celebrations, Martha has been a "Proud" supporter and performer at many LGBT events throughout the country for more than 30 years including performing at the opening ceremony of the first OutGames in Montreal. This will be Martha Wash's first time performing at

the Pride Festival of Central PA. Other scheduled first time performers at the 2017 festival include: Singer Songwriter and York County Native Brandon Parsons. Half Past Seven, a three-piece pop and rock band from Southeastern Pennsylvania. Harrisburg's Lovers of Music Band, an R&B, Jazz and Funk ensemble and classic rock folk singer Natalie Darkes. Returning this year for their second performance on the Ms. Biscuit Pride Festival Stage is the five piece all girl rock band, Fierce, based out of Lancaster, PA. Harrisburg's favorite Latin/Caribbean band, Los Monstros returns to the line-up this year. This is Los Monstros' third appearance at the Pride Festival.

Nothing's More American Than Baseball and LGBTQ Pride

There's nothing more American than baseball and diversity. June 14, 6:30 p.m. is LGBTQ Baseball Night in York.

The scheduled game is between York Revolution vs. The New Britain Bees, People's Bank Stadium, 5 Brooks Robinson Way, York, PA 17401.



Join the Revolution in welcoming the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer fans of the region PeoplesBank Park. June 14 is a Wednesday and that means the day is a PeoplesBank Kids Eat Free Wednesday. Attendees can pick up a kids food voucher at any PeoplesBank Financial Center before the game.

The Pride Day in the Ballpark features a Pride Flag giveaway sponsored by Equality Fest, performances, first pitches thrown out by York LGBTQ veterans, York "Heavy Hitter" Awards for York LGBTQ Pioneers, entertainment, and more. Equality Fest is August 6 in York.

Info: http://www.yorkrevolution.com

ART ASSOCIATION OF HARRISBURG Events

89th ANNUAL JURIED EXHIBITION:
May 12th - June 15th
Awards Reception: Sat., May 13th, 6 - 9 pm
Kate Earley & Randy Michener, Exhibition Sponsors.
Reception by Mellow-Minded Café. Music by Tressa Paul.

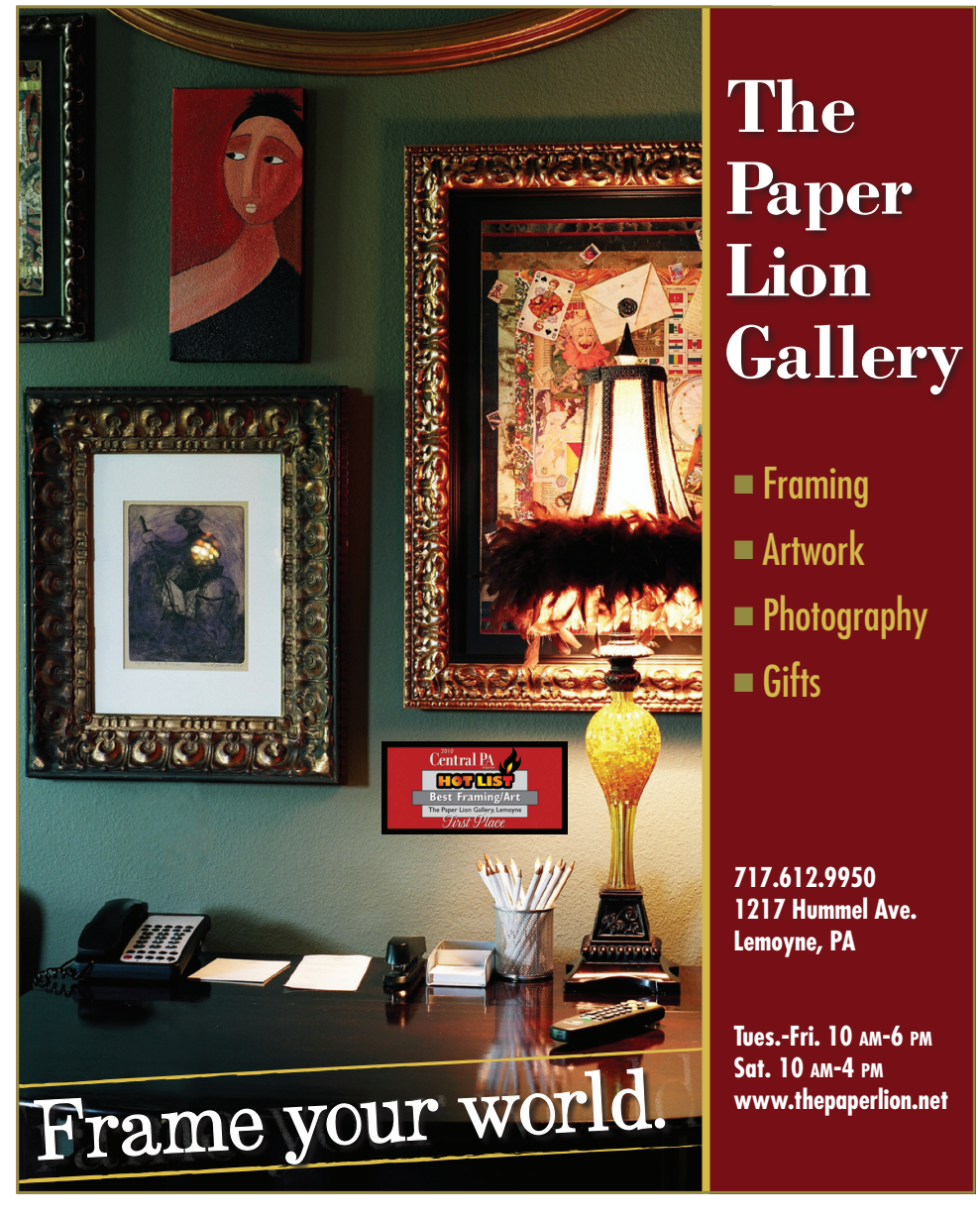
PREAKNESS SOIRÉE:
Sat., May 20th, 4 - 8 pm
Hosted by Don Weaver at his Lewisberry Home;
$45 IN ADVANCE, $50 AT THE DOOR.
Featured artists: Bonnie Bissett, Mary DePalma, Mary Hochendoner, Josephine Alexander, Diane Delozier, Southpoint Bonzai.

FRONT ST. SOIRÉE I:
Sat., June 10th, 5 - 8 pm
Hosted by Marc Kurowski at his home in Harrisburg;
$45 IN ADVANCE, $50 AT THE DOOR.
Featured artists: Danielle Klebes, Dalton James, Anne Benton Yeager, Brian Eppley.

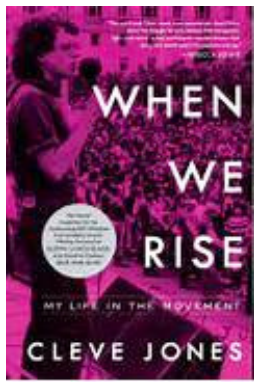
ART TOUR OF MICHAEL ENNIS'S HOME:
Sun., June 18th, 1 - 4 pm; Briggs St., Harrisburg;
$15 IN ADVANCE, $20 AT THE DOOR.

ART SCHOOL ANNUAL EXHIBITION:
June 23rd - July 20th;
Awards Reception: Fri., June 23th, 5-8 pm.
David Volkman, Exhibition Sponsor; Anne Davis, Reception Host; Music at Reception by Tom & Laurie Reese.

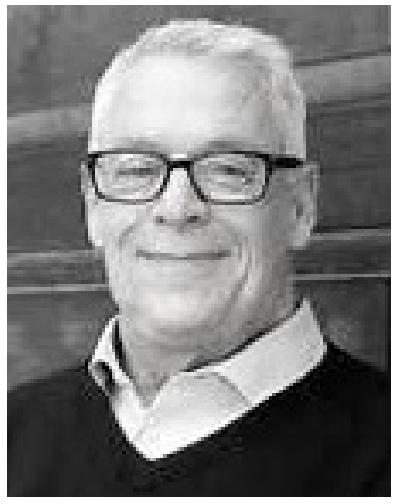
(717) 236-1432
www.ArtAssocOfHbg.com
21 North Front Street, Harrisburg
CULTURAL ENRICHMENT FUND



When We Rise...*We Argue?*



Miniseries chronicaling history of LGBT movement sparks inevitable complaints about inclusion



Author and AIDS Quilt founder, Cleve Jones.

Left, Jones' book, When We Rise, and below, the ABC miniseries inspired by his book.

By Frank Pizzoli

Now that the 8-hour ABC miniseries *When We Rise* has been screened, *Central Voice* talked to AIDS Quilt founder Cleve Jones, author of the book by that title.

"I didn't write the screenplay. Dustin Lance Black did," Jones clarifies early in our talk.

"The script is not exactly accurate but mostly true," he explained. The not true parts concern dates and times rather than tales made from whole cloth. "One scene takes place, a true scene, in a venue that closed when I was a little boy," he says.

Essentially, the zeitgeist of the times is preserved.

"It's not perfect but it is the most inclusive presentation of our community on national television," Jones says. He surmises that Black wanted to present to ABC viewers a wide swath of the LGBT experience. There was an online battle over what some viewers saw as the exclusion of bisexual characters.

"We also didn't have deaf or disabled characters, or MCC [Metropolitan Community Church] which played an incalculable role. It's impossible to get all segments of our community into a story. Read my book. That's my story. Black reached beyond that," Jones advises readers.

In contrast to the bisexual complaint, many reviews of the screenplay lauded the intersectionality of the screenplay.

Main character Ken Jones is a gay, Black Christian. Roma Guy is lesbian. Jones is a white, gay male. Sounds like a standard issue (real life) cast from the years Jones book covers. "The current buzz word is Intersectional. Back then, we called it The Movement. Show up, raise your hand, get involved. Lead. Follow. Contribute," he says.

Reviews call the series "honest". Jones did not hide anything.

Bath houses, promiscuity, non-monogamy, it's all there. "Lesbian separatism, many threads and themes, especially how a national movement often by necessity drops nuance in search of a larger non-gay audience," Jones says.

Complex.

That's the other frequently occurring word in reviews.

The criminalization of homosexuality, Harvey Milk's assassination (Milk was Jones' one-time lover and always mentor), the challenges of AIDS, and the violence.

One thing is clear: Whatever role you played or now play in the movement for basic civil rights, tell your story. Your story. No one of us will ever be able to include – or credibly tell - all the stories from our rich past and even richer present.

Author and activist Cleve Jones, along with David Mixner, organized the March on Washington. Assembled by LGBT Community Center, a local group, pictured above, sent buses to the Oct. 11, 2009 protest organized by Equality Across America and met with Jones and Mixner.

Central PA Will Be Singin' It's Heart Out

If choral concerts are your thing, you're in luck!

Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus and Voices United, a combined performance by Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, Central PA Womyn's Chorus and the Metropolitan Community Church Spirit Choir, are scheduled in May and July.

The Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, celebrating its 30th Anniversary (they're calling it The Big Three-Oh!) offers a free admission (donations accepted) concert Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m., Heidelberg United Church of Christ, 47 W Philadelphia St., York.

Then on Sat., May 20, 8 p.m. and Sun., May 21, 2 p.m. HGMC performs in the ballroom at Harrisburg Midtown Arts Center, 1110 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg. General admission is $15.

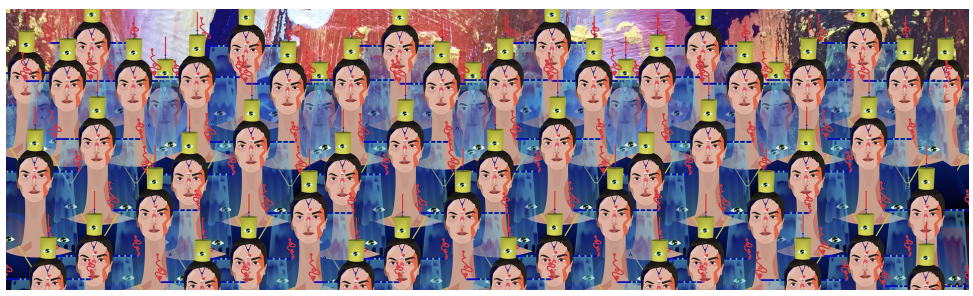
The chorus will perform new creations from up-and-coming composers, previously performed pieces written especially for the chorus, and some old favorites.

Tickets available at the door or online at www.harrisburggaymenschorus.org/events.

Voices United, a combined performance by Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, Central PA Womyn's Chorus and the Metropolitan Community Church Spirit Choir, is slated for July 28, 8 p.m., Market Square Presbyterian Church, 20 S, 2nd St., Harrisburg. General admission is $15.

The combined choruses perform a musical cantata, singing a 'joyful noise' to celebrate the opening of the 2017 Pride Festival of Central Pennsylvania, Sat., July 29.

All proceeds from the Voices United concert are donated to the Pride Festival of Central PA, whose mission is to increase positive visibility of the region's LGBT community by providing opportunities to express and celebrate diverse perspectives, emphasizing acceptance of all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.



It's Going to be a Wild Ride in the Keystone State

The first Keystone State Gay Rodeo will be held June 24-25 at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex.

Event registration and a Kick-off Welcome Party is scheduled for June 23.

The Keystone State Gay Rodeo is an all-inclusive rodeo and community event where everyone is welcome to attend. Both men and women, members of the LGBTQ community and their straight allies, will be competing equally in all rodeo events including bull riding, barrel racing, chute dogging, and many more. The rodeo starts each day at 10 a.m.

"We still need vendors," says Adam Romanik, president, Keystone State Gay Rodeo Association.

The rodeo weekend includes two exciting full days of rodeo action, line dance lessons and a Country Ho-Down Saturday night, activities for kids, vendors and a rodeo kick-off party on Friday night.

A portion of the rodeo proceeds will go directly to the event's charity partner, Alder Health Services. Alder Health Services is a non-profit organization in Harrisburg, PA that improves the health and well-being of individuals living with HIV/AIDS and members of the LGBTQ community by providing a culturally competent and affirming environment that empowers the people we serve.

Special Rodeo features include cam ping facilities which are available at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex. There is a County Ho Down June 24 with dancing lessons prior to event.

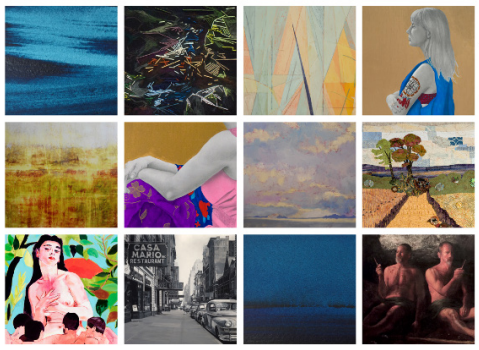
"We've had great support from the region's LGBT community," says Romanik.

There are eight organizations serving as community partners: Central PA LGBT Center; Atlantic States Gay Rodeo Association; MCC of the Spirit, Harrisburg; Dover UCC; St Paul's UCC; Equality PA; Rock Run Animal Rescue; and Central PA Equality Foundation. Community partners are helping sell rodeo tickets and market the rodeo with a portion of the ticket sales proceeds going to their respective organizations.

Full schedule: http://ksgra.org complete weekend schedule.

MAY & JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

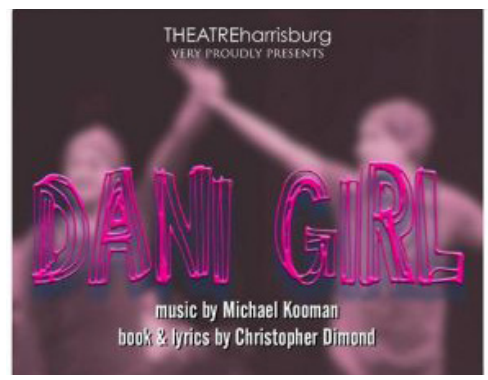
RITES OF SPRING FESTIVAL
Majestic Theatre, Gettysburg College
May 07, 11 a.m.
North America's Premier Prog Festival The Rites of Spring Festival in Gettysburg, PA is proud to feature 11 great bands over 3 days in the first weekend of May 2017. Info: 717-337-8200; boxofficeinfo@gettysburg.edu



89TH ANNUAL JURIED SHOW
Art Association of Harrisburg
May 13 thru June 15
The popular, annual juried show showcases fabulous art from all over. The region's most sophisticated juried show.

BIG, THE MUSICAL
Fulton Theatre
June 17, 2017–July 22, 2017
A carnival wish granted, young Josh Baskin's dream to become "big" comes true at the hands of the Zoltar machine, and he is immediately thrusted into adulthood. Josh discovers being an adult is not all fun and games when he is forced to find a job and a girlfriend. In the end he learns we must all grow up at our own pace, in our own time.
Tickets: Purchased at Theatre, by calling 717-397-7425, or online.

THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN
Sharadin Bigler Theatre
June 8–17
The Cripple of Inishmaan is a dark yet surprisingly touching comedy-drama by Martin McDonagh. Witness a remote Irish village in the 1930s in which everyone goes a little crazy — and they're rather crazy under normal circumstances — when they hear that filmmakers from Hollywood will be making a movie in their town. The Cripple of Inishmaanis a major play from one of our best modern playwrights. Sweet and sentimental as well as dark and brooding, it is as sweet and savory as a hearty Irish stew.
Tickets: (717) 733-7966; epacboxoffice@gmail.com



DANI GIRL
Theatre Harrisburg
Krevsky Production Center
May 4 - May 21, 2017
When Dani, a precocious nine-year-old, loses her hair to leukemia, she embarks on a magical journey to get it back.
Tickets: 717-214-ARTS (2787)

RuPaul Finally Ties the Knot with Longtime BF

By Central Voice

After 23 years with Wyoming rancher Georges LeBar, RuPaul secretly tied the knot.

"I've never said this on television before," RuPaul, 56, announced on *Hollywood Today Live*. "We are married!" The couple wed in January, he said, on their anniversary.

"I met him on the dance floor at Limelight in 1994 on his birthday," explained RuPaul. "We got married on his birthday, on the anniversary of the night we met."

"We never wanted to do it," RuPaul said. "We were looking into it for really for tax breaks and financial (reasons)."

"We thought, 'We don't have to get married,'" he says, recalling their decision-making process. "But then, in light of what's happening currently in the world today, what's happening in Washington, we thought, you know what? Let's do it. Let's just do it, because there's too much at stake with our businesses ... so, that's why we did it."

But he says marriage hasn't changed anything about their relationship.

"That piece of paper don't mean nothin'!" he laughed. "If you are devoted to a person, nothing's going to change that. And after 23 years, I know him, he knows me. I love him. He's my favorite person on the planet and I've met a lot of people."

No stranger to Central Pennsylvania, in 2008 RuPaul appeared at York's now-closed Club XS for a Black and White AIDS Benefit.

"Hi, it's Ru," said the voice from LA

Georges LeBar and RuPaul with a friend in Wyoming.

on the telephone when contacted about her appearance. She takes her own calls. "I just made by first cup of coffee this morning, it smells so good."

> **"He's my favorite person on the planet and I've met a lot of people."**

Ru was that much at peace with herself these days, not an easy claim for performers often burnt from the glare of publicity.

While rehearsing for her appearance, he allowed me to break his long-standing rule: No rubbernecks at his sound check before the show.

I sat quietly in complete darkness as he worked through his usual run-through on every aspect of his performance later that night.

A seasoned performer, he was working with a talented technical crew that wasn't as finger-snap quick as he normally had on hand. Yet his manner was professional, warm, but firm. He seemed every bit the Southern boy raised by adults who taught him manners, charm, and to have a firm grip on life.

That firm grip is still holding on to the reigns of his celebrity image.

In a prescient way Ru said at the time "We live in a time when fear trumps love. The Fun Gestapo runs the show now."

Yet Ru's view of the world hasn't dulled his senses.

Don't be fooled into thinking she's all gaiety and glitter. Ru has a deeply spiritual center. "We're here with a gift, our human form," she says. She imagines herself, each of us whether we realize it or not, as "observing vessels" through which life flows.

Ru's personal mission is expressed in the message stitched inside each of his man suits - "You're born naked and the rest is drag." Amen to that.

Turnpike Service Plazas Debut as Unique Galleries for Student Art

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) and Pennsylvania Council for the Arts (PCA) have announced a new partnership that connects student artists with art being developed for stops along the PA Turnpike.

The new program, called Art Sparks, will use the PCA's Arts in Education residency program to develop student-created, original pieces of art for Turnpike service plazas across the 550-mile system. These public art pieces will be on display in service plazas across Pennsylvania over a five-year cycle.

The Turnpike's Lawn Service Plaza is where Art Sparks will make its debut. The pilot residency project is being conducted with art students at Lower Dauphin High School in partnership with HMS Host at the Lawn Service Plaza. The PCA's regional Arts in Education partner, Jump Street, is coordinating the residency program, which began in late February and will end by mid-April. Students in the High School Art 2 Class are working with a teaching artist, Megan Davis, to create a mural that will reflect the Harrisburg/Hershey region.

THE LONG ROAD to the FIRST PRIDE PARADES

Without history there is no freedom. Disappointingly, schools and now many universities no longer teach Civics or much History. The chronology below isn't meant to be exhaustive. It is meant to whet your appetite to search further. Locally, there is the LGBT History Project at centralpalgbtenter.org

By **Central Voice**

1952

CHRISTINE JORGENSEN becomes the first widely publicized person to have undergone sex reassignment surgery, in this case, male to female, creating a world-wide sensation.

1954

A. M. Turing

Mathematical and computer genius Alan Turing commits suicide by cyanide poisoning, 18 months after being given a choice between two years in prison or libido-reducing hormone treatment for a year as a punishment for homosexuality.

A succession of well-known men, including Lord Montagu, Michael Pitt-Rivers and Peter Wildeblood, were convicted of homosexual offences as British police pursued a McCarthy-like purge of Society homosexuals.

1955

The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) was founded in San Francisco in 1955 by four lesbian couples (including Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon) and was the first national lesbian political and social organization in the United States.

Mattachine Society New York chapter founded.

1957

The word "Transsexual" is coined by U.S. physician Harry Benjamin.

The Wolfenden Committee's report recommends decriminalizing consensual homosexual behavior between adults in the United Kingdom.

Psychologist Evelyn Hooker publishes a study showing that homosexual men are as well adjusted as non-homosexual men, which becomes a major factor in the American Psychiatric Association removing homosexuality from its handbook of disorders in 1973.

1958

BARBARA GITTINGS founds the New York chapter of Daughters of Bilitis.

The Homosexual Law Reform Society is founded in the United Kingdom.

The United States Supreme Court rules in favor of the First Amendment rights of a gay and lesbian magazine, marking the first time the United States Supreme Court had ruled on a case involving homosexuality.

Homoerotic artist **TOM OF FINLAND** first published on the cover of *Physique Pictorial* magazine from Los Angeles.

1959

The first homosexual uprising in the U.S. occurs at Cooper's Doughnuts in Los Angeles; rioters were arrested by LAPD.

1960

Cpls. Fannie Mae Clackum and Grace Garner, U.S. Air Force reservists in the late '40s and early '50s, became the first people to successfully challenge their discharges from the U.S. military for being gay, although the ruling turned on the fact that there wasn't enough evidence to show the women were lesbians — rather than that there was nothing wrong with it if they were.

1961

José Sarria becomes the first openly gay candidate for public office in the U.S. when he runs for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Illinois becomes the first U.S. state to remove sodomy law from its criminal code through passage of the American Law Institute's Model Penal Code.

1963

Israel de facto decriminalizes sodomy and sexual acts between men by judicial decision against the enforcement of the relevant section in the old British-mandate law from 1936 (which in fact was never enforced).

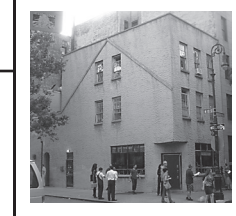
1964

The first photograph of lesbians on the cover of lesbian magazine *The Ladder* was done in September 1964, showing two women from the back, on a beach looking out to sea.

1965

Conservatively dressed gays and lesbians demonstrate outside Independence Hall in Philadelphia on July 4,1965. This was the first in a series of Annual Reminders that took place through 1969.

1966



The Mattachine Society stages a "Sip-In" at **JULIUS BAR** in New York City challenging a New York State Liquor Authority prohibiting serving alcohol to gays.

1967

BAIL WITHOUT ARREST RECORD? Page 3 — LES CRANE DISCOVERS US! Page 5

The Los Angeles ADVOCATE 25¢

VOL. 1 NO. 3 — a PRIDE publication — November 1967

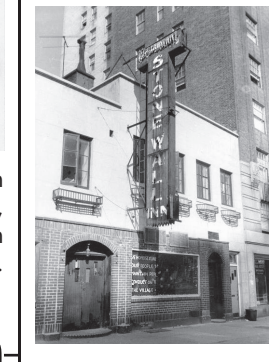
PRIDE WINS !!

Court Frees Two, Rules Law Invalid

The Advocate was first published in September as *The Los Angeles Advocate*, a local newsletter alerting gay men to police raids in Los Angeles gay bars.

1969

The Stonewall riots occur in New York City.



1970

The first Gay Liberation Day March is held in New York City.

The first LGBT Pride Parade is held in New York City.

The first *Gay-in* held in San Francisco.

COME JOIN US!

June 25, 2017
Noon - 6 pm
Lancaster PA
PRIDE 2017
Binns Park

www.facebook.com/LancasterPAPride
for an up-to-date list of entertainers, vendors, and sponsors

Sunday, June 25th
Binns Park
12 PM - 6 PM
$5 Admission Fee
(children under 12 free)

Something for everyone!

This outdoor festival will feature an array of talented entertainment, varied vendor offerings from arts and crafts to Pride regalia, and a full menu of food offerings.

FESTIVAL GUIDELINES:
- Please do your part to keep the area clean and safe—pick up trash and recyclables and deposit in their proper receptacles located throughout the park
- Ignore any protesters
- Report problems quickly to Pride workers or security personnel
- No Smoking

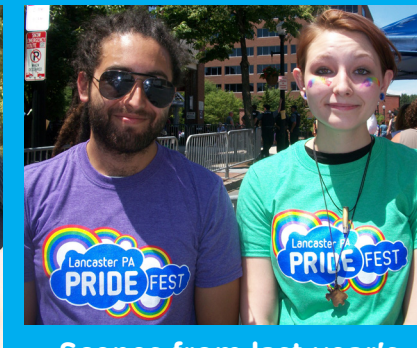
Be sure to visit the PRIDE table for raffle tickets and PRIDE information

The PRIDE Board would like to thank our talented entertainers, varied vendors, dedicated volunteers, and all of our supporters. Lancaster PA PRIDE is only possible because of you!

Lancaster PRIDE is a project of the LGBT Center LGBT center

Central VOICE
Lancaster PA
PRIDE GUIDE

Lancaster Pride and Central Voice are proud to celebrate the diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, questioning, and ally communities in Lancaster County through building community and pride in who we are.



Scenes from last year's Lancaster Pride Festival

Come Back To Church

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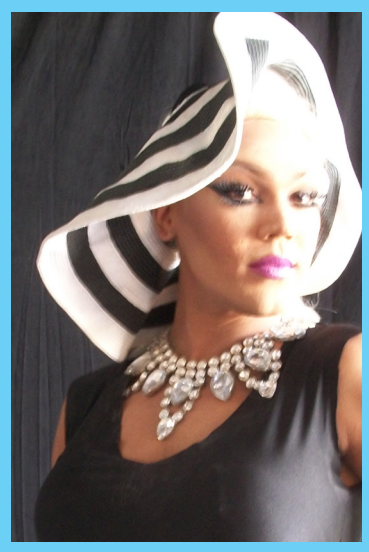

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

The new adminstration quietly deletes sexuality questions from surveys

Invisible Again

LGBT advocates are questioning the Trump administration's deletion of questions on sexuality from two federal surveys.

Combined with the withdrawal of another planned survey evaluating the effectiveness of a homelessness project for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, the moves have alarmed watchdogs who worry they may point to a manipulation of government data collection to serve the ideology of a government they view as hostile to their causes.

"In an age when LGBT rights are such a part of the national discussion, the Trump administration is choosing to not only ignore us but erase us from the discussion," said Laura Durso, vice president of the LGBT Research and Communications Project at the Center for American Progress, a nonprofit liberal advocacy group. She worried officials might be rolling back such data collection elsewhere.

Each year, a survey done by the Department of Health and Human Services gathers data from those receiving transportation, homemaker and meal services, visiting senior centers, or taking part in other programs funded by the Older Americans Act. A draft of this year's National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants, released this month, removes a single query asking whether a respondent is gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual from a battery of demographic questions.

A second HHS-sponsored survey, the Annual Program Performance Report for Centers for Independent Living, gathers feedback on counseling, skills training and other services provided to the disabled. A revised draft posted four days after President Donald Trump's inauguration included a question on sexual orientation, but the survey was subsequently edited, with the deletion of the sexuality question the only apparent notable change.

Kelly Mack, a spokeswoman for the Administration for Community Living, the HHS division which oversees the two surveys, said Monday the orientation question was included in past surveys as part of a pilot test, but that the sample size was insufficient to be reliable. Advocates reject that explanation, saying the data has already provided some insight into LGBT elders.

A draft of the Older Americans Act survey included no other question changes. After Mack said Friday that the orientation question was one of several being eliminated, The Associated Press asked her to identify the other questions. She responded Monday saying a portion of a question on survey respondents' date of birth was being cut, though the survey draft still included that query.

The LGBT question was introduced on the survey in 2014, a move heralded by gay rights groups because of the dearth of federally-collected data of their communities and the potential to validate programs or identify areas where services may be inadequate.

An administration official said Trump political appointees at the agency reviewed the OAA survey but targeted only LGBT questions. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to comment on behalf of the agency.

"I view this as a policy change, not the end of a pilot," said Kathy Greenlee, who was HHS' assistant secretary for aging under President Barack Obama and led efforts to increase data collection on LGBT people. Greenlee, now with the Center for Practical Bioethics, said though all survey questions are approved for three years at a time, the addition of the LGBT question was never envisioned as a temporary entry.

Separately, a survey planned by the Department of Housing and Urban Development on an LGBT homelessness project was withdrawn, according to a notice in the Federal Register. The Obama administration had planned interviews, surveys and focus groups to determine the efficacy of the program, but the information-gathering had not yet begun.

Michael Adams, CEO of Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders, or SAGE, said halting the data collection had the potential to affect not just federal funding and programming, but those at the state and local level that take their cues from Washington.

"It's a big deal to make this change," Adams said. "What this is about is stripping out an entire population."

Accepting the Republican nomination last summer, Trump said he would "do everything in my power to protect LGBTQ citizens" and after taking office, he pledged to maintain Obama administration job protections for LGBT federal employees. But his administration stepped back from Obama's position allowing transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms corresponding to their gender identity, and LGBT advocates have said they're troubled by cabinet appointees, including HHS Secretary Tom Price, whom they regard as virulently anti-gay.

David Stacy, head of policy for the Human Rights Campaign, said the survey moves fit a pattern from an administration that has shown an aversion to facts: "If you deny the problem exists by not having the data, it certainly makes it easier to pursue the policy you prefer without regards to reality."

2018: Washington Hosts Nation's Largest Activist Conference

Celebrating its 30th year anniversary, the National LGBTQ Task Force's Creating Change Conference will take place on January 24-28, 2018 at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park.

Over 3,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) advocates, community leaders, policy experts, and allies from across the country are expected to attend the conference.

Central Voice was a 2017 Media sponsor of Creating Change.

"Creating Change is celebrating 30 years of training and mobilizing the next generation of social justice advocates and we want you to join!" said Rea Carey, National LGBTQ Task Force's Executive Director. "We are energized to bring back our fight to the city where Creating Change started three decades ago. Furthermore, President Donald Trump's litany of deplorable attacks on our freedom, justice, and equity represents a clear call-to-action. We encourage everyone to join us in our continued resistance of Trump's divisive agenda."

Since 1988, Creating Change has grown from 300 people to over 3,000 activists and community leaders from across the country and elsewhere in the world. The annual five-day convening will include over 200 skills-building workshops, presentations, trainings, day-long institutes, special receptions, plenary sessions, networking sessions, hospitality suites, interfaith services, and office visits with members of Congress. There will also be actions against the Trump administration.

To learn more about the conference, please visit: www.creatingchange.org

Former Local Attorney Wins Trump Immigration Suit

By Central Voice

He won.

Central Voice reported last issue that Denver college student Zakaria Hagig, 24, a Muslim from Libya, filed a lawsuit Jan. 31 against President Donald Trump's travel ban for immigrants and refugees. Libya is one of seven Muslim-majority countries linked to concerns about terrorism. Hagig won.

He had the help of former local attorney Alan Kennedy-Shaffer and former Colorado state senator Morgan Carroll. Kennedy-Shaffer, founder of Harrisburg Hope, has written for Central Voice about his work with that organization and on other topics.

"When I first got here, I felt like I am equal, just like everybody else, no matter what skin color, no matter what religion you practice. That's the unique thing about the United States, the diversity," Hagig told FOX 31 Denver.

When President Trump issued his now-defunct executive order, that's when one Kennedy-Shaffer, decided to lend a hand. "He and I hadn't talked about immigration issues until the executive order came out," Kennedy-Shaffer told The Washington Post. "The order frightened the entire community here in Colorado."

Hagig's case was one of six covered in a page one New York Times story April 1.

The end result is that Hagig can travel to and from Libya. His parents can visit the US for his graduation.

Should PA Legalize Pot?

Recently PA Auditor General Eugene DePasquale recommended Pennsylvania consider regulating and taxing marijuana to help with our state budget. The blossoming industry is approaching $20 billion mark and expected to employ more than 280,000 in the next decade.

"The regulation and taxation of the marijuana train has rumbled out of the station, and it is time to add a stop in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania," DePasquale said during a news conference at the state capitol.

Nearby Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland are considering regulating and taxing marijuana.

"I make this recommendation because it is a more sane policy to deal with a critical issue facing the state. Other states are already taking advantage of the opportunity for massive job creation and savings from reduced arrests and criminal prosecutions," DePasquale said. He anticipates that marijuana regulation would generate hundreds of millions of dollars annually "that could help tackle Pennsylvania's budget problems."

Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, Oregon and Washington have all regulated and taxed marijuana in recent years. Washington, DC has legalized marijuana, but does not yet have retail sales.

In 2012, Colorado voters approved legalizing, regulating and taxing marijuana. Last year, Colorado – which has less than half the population of Pennsylvania – brought in $129 million in tax revenue on $1 billion in marijuana sales from the new industry that had already created an estimated 18,000 jobs.

"The revenue that could be generated would help address Pennsylvania's revenue and spending issue. But there is more to this than simply tax dollars and jobs," DePasquale said. "There is also social impact, specifically related to arrests, and the personal, emotional, and financial devastation that may result from such arrests."

In Colorado's experience, after regulation and taxation of marijuana, the total number of marijuana arrests decreased by nearly half between 2012 and 2014, from nearly 13,000 arrests to 7,000 arrests. Marijuana possession arrests, which make up the majority of all marijuana arrests, were nearly cut in half, down 47 percent, and marijuana sales arrests decreased by 24 percent.

"All told, this decrease in arrest numbers represent thousands of people who would otherwise have blemished records that could prevent them from obtaining future employment or even housing," DePasquale said. "Decriminalization also generates millions in savings from fewer arrests and prosecutions."

DePasquale said Pennsylvania has already benefited by some cities decriminalizing marijuana.

In Philadelphia, marijuana arrests went from 2,843 in 2014 to 969 in 2016. Based on a recent study, the RAND Corporation estimated the cost for each marijuana arrest and prosecution is approximately $2,200. Using those figures, that's a savings of more than $4.1 million in one Pennsylvania city.

Last year, York, Dauphin, Chester, Delaware, Bucks and Montgomery counties each had more arrests for small amounts of marijuana than Philadelphia. Those counties had between 800 and 1,400 arrests in 2015.

"Obviously, regulation and taxation of marijuana is not something that should be entered into lightly," DePasquale said. "Should Pennsylvania join the growing number of states benefiting financially and socially from the taxation and regulation of marijuana; there are many things to consider, including details about age limits, regulatory oversight, licensing, grow policies, sale and use locations, and possession limitations."

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book reviews

By Yvonne Carmichael
Collection Management Administrator
Dauphin County Library System
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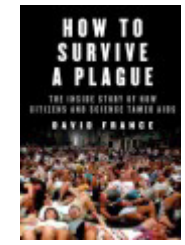
The Publishing Triangle and the Ferro-Grumley Literary Awards will be announced on April 27 of this year. The awards will be for books that represent the very best in LGBT writing for the calendar year 2016. The Dauphin County Library System would like to highlight some of the titles that are up for this year's awards, and believes you will enjoy checking out these and others from our libraries. Remember, all you need is a library card and they are free.

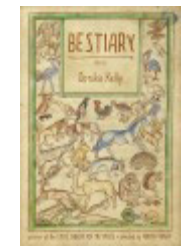
***Hide,* by Matthew Griffin**
"Set in a declining textile town in North Carolina, Hide is the love story of Wendell Wilson, a taxidermist, and Frank Clifton, a veteran of World War II. They meet after the war, in a time when such love holds real danger. But, severing nearly all ties with the rest of the world, they carve out a home for themselves on the outskirts of town seems to protect them. But when Wendell finds Frank lying motionless outside at the age of eighty-three, their carefully crafted life together begins to unravel." (Provided by publisher)



***How To Survive a Plague: The Inside Story of how Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS,* by David France**
"This is the story of the men and women who, watching their friends and lovers fall, ignored by public officials, religious leaders, and the nation at large, and confronted with shame and hatred, chose to fight for their right to live. We witness the founding of ACT UP and TAG (Treatment Action Group), the rise of an underground drug market in opposition to the prohibitively expensive (and sometimes toxic) AZT, and the gradual movement toward a lifesaving medical breakthrough. (Provided by publisher)

***Moonstone: The Boy Who Never Was, by Sjón, translated from the Icelandic,* by Victoria Cribb**
"The "boy who never was" is one Máni Steinn Karlsson, a 16-year-old who has sex with men for money in Reykjavík. The year is 1918, and Máni's reality is made up of living on the fringes of society and going to the cinema. While he sleeps, he dreams in pictures, the threads of his own life weaving through the tapestry of the films he loves. When the Spanish flu epidemic comes ashore, killing hundreds of townspeople and forcing thousands to their sick beds, the shadows that linger at the edges of existence grow darker and Mani is forced to re-evaluate both the society around him and his role in it." (Provided by the publisher)

***The Narrow Door: A Memoir of Friendship,* by Paul Lisicky**
"In The Narrow Door, Paul Lisicky creates a compelling collage of scenes and images drawn from two long-term relationships, one with a woman novelist and the other with his ex-husband, a poet. Denise and Paul, stretched by the demands of their writing lives, drift apart, and Paul's romance begins to falter. And the world around them is frail: environmental catastrophes like the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, natural disasters like the earthquake in Haiti, and local disturbances make an unsettling backdrop to the pressing concerns of Denise's cancer diagnosis and Paul's impending breakup. Lisicky's compassionate heart and resilience seem all the stronger in the face of such searing losses. His survival--hard-won, unsentimental, authentic--proves that in turning toward loss, we embrace life."--Page 4 of cover.



***Bestiary: Poems,* by Donika Kelly**
"Across this remarkable first book are encounters with animals, legendary beasts, and mythological monsters—half human and half something else. Donika Kelly's Bestiary is a catalog of creatures—from the whale and ostrich to the pegasus and chimera to the centaur and griffin. Among them too are poems of love, self-discovery, and travel from "Out West" to "Back East." Lurking in the middle of this powerful and multifaceted collection is a wrenching sequence that wonders just who or what is the real monster inside this life of survival and reflection. Selected and with an introduction by the National Book Award Winner Nikki Finney, Bestiary questions what it is that makes us human, that makes us whole." (Taken from the Publisher's website)

GSA Students Launch In-School Food Pantry

By Sue Kerr

The students in this Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) – the second largest in the Pittsburgh Public School system – are in the midst of launching a student-led food pantry to meet the needs of their peers who are experiencing hunger.

The conversation started several months ago during a GSA meeting when the youth were discussing hunger and considered that some of their fellow students acted aggressively or inappropriately. One students pointed out that some of them were hungry. While the student families are served by the second-largest food pantry in Pennsylvania, many of their families simply don't have enough food resources to meet their needs.

"Hungry kids want dignity, too."
-Pittsburgh student

The school offers breakfast and lunch programs, but the breakfast is described as unappetizing and portioned the same for a 16-year-old junior as for an 8-year-old elementary student. And the school's backpack program which provides a bag of food for the weekend often doesn't meet the needs of the teens.

So the group decided to do something about it. They started off by meeting with an anti-hunger activist Mary Shull and then with representatives of Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The school principal allocated a closet to be used for storage and distribution, with a commitment to provide further space if the project is successful. The Food Bank can provide an array of items on a regular basis free of charge to member food pantries, but the students knew that it was essential to provide food that the kids would actually eat.

They created a 10-person committee who converted the Food Bank list into a student survey which was distributed school wide. They had to use a paper format because not all students have computer access. They are in the process of tabulating the results to create a simple inventory.

The Perry High Pantry will eventually feature items from the Food Bank as well as supplemental items purchased with private cash donations. The students are committed to offering an array of culturally appropriate personal care products as well as bottled water to meet the needs of students whose homes lack running water for drinking and bathing.

One of the students said "Hungry kids want dignity, too."

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Do You Love Yourself?

making sense of life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

How's your self-esteem? Your answer may depend more on how you were treated by the last person with whom you had a conversation than how you might like to be perceived. That's exactly where we're going to begin the second segment of our five-part series this year on self-care.

Exactly what is "self-esteem?" Esteem starts with respect. To be "held in high esteem" is a term that we often use with regard to our leaders, with some past and many current exceptions. It may be used for those individuals that people in general may put on a pedestal, like spiritual leaders, sports figures and other celebrities.

Is that kind of respect something that would come naturally for you to express about yourself? I was raised in a strict, Christian environment. We did NOT blow our own horns … ever. This may not have been what my parents meant to instill in me, but it's what I got from a slight glance, a furrowed brow or, the absolute worst, silence.

This is what I surmised as a boy child; it was worse for my sister. Besides all those unwritten rules we picked up on she also had to be submissive to men. Yeah, we grew up with a few self-esteem issues, even though our parents praised us whenever possible. Conflicting messages abounded.

Add to this being gay in a religion and society that had zero tolerance for my interest in anything that sparkled or singing and dancing to show tunes (yes, I'm a stereotype at times, so get over it), and you understand that I've done my fair share of inner work on how to appreciate my own abilities. Here's what I've come up with over the years:

First, blowing your own horn isn't such a bad thing;

Second, discover what you're great at and express it; and,

Third, come from love, compassion and a sense of service to others.

As an entrepreneur I've had to get over my aversion to marketing, something I used to avoid. It's especially challenging for those of us whose product is "us." Recently my last book, "How to Find You Vision and Get a Life!" won an award in the spiritual psychology category. I've been writing professionally for over two decades and this was my first award, so as you can imagine I was pretty jazzed.

I admit I initially felt telling people would be blowing my own horn, perhaps inviting disapproval. But, I went ahead and announced it to my eList subscribers and on social media without receiving any negative feedback. Marketing what we're good at, for business or philanthropic reasons, is about helping others, not sounding like and being like a sleazy infomercial.

I love helping other people discover their unique abilities or talents, which is what the second point is about. I truly believe we're each born with qualities unique to us, perhaps not in the gift or attribute itself, but in the way we express it. Once we discover what it is we love to do our whole life changes if we begin doing that thing. The universe starts opening doors we formerly thought were tightly locked. Opportunities come to us from the most unusual places. Why? Because that's how universal laws work! If life isn't that way for us then we may be unconsciously fighting the program, even though our intentions are good.

Finally, we must come from love, show compassion to others and be open to serving without fear. When we put ourselves out there we may very well attract criticism. This is especially true in a world where financial gain trumps these three qualities. There's nothing wrong with having money, but it can't be our basis for self-esteem. Why? Expecting money to be anything other than transient and changeable is unrealistic. Our life savings and pensions can imploded in the blink of an eye, something you may have already experienced.

Another reason this works is that being kind feels so good and, whether we expected it to do so or not, when we feel good we are healthier, happier and more successful. The simple fact is that it takes no money and very little effort to be kind to others – just be fumbling with an armload of packages and have someone open a door for you to understand how simple the act of kindness can be.

No one is going to give us self-esteem. We have to believe we are worthy of love, appreciation and respect. The mistake we often make is to look for the qualities we seek in others rather than within our own consciousness. In the next segment of this series we'll look at what it takes to find and enjoy contentment in life. Until then, be who you are without reservation, love yourself unconditionally and dance like no one is watching!

Terry is an author, speaker, licensed social worker and flight attendant. Read his weekly blog at blog.terrydrewkaranen.com. He is also the director of Spirit, Mind and Body Foundation (spiritmindbodyfoundation.org).

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Men: *Hands Off!*

Texas lawmaker files bill that penalizes men for masturbating

By Chris Perez

A Texas lawmaker has filed a bill that would fine men $100 for masturbating — declaring it "an act against an unborn child."

Rep. Jessica Farrar introduced the legislation in the attempt to satirize current laws and shed light on the gap between reproductive health care regulations for men and women, according to the *Austin American-Statesman*.

"Although HB 4260 is satirical, there is nothing funny about current health care restrictions for women and the very real legislation that is proposed every legislative session," the Houston Democrat wrote in a statement on Facebook.

The bill, dubbed the "Man's Right to Know Act," contains provisions that would also put restrictions on vasectomies, Viagra prescriptions and colonoscopies.

"[The legislation] mirrors real TX laws and health care restrictions faced by TX women every #txlege session," Farrar tweeted Saturday.

Rep. Jessica Farrar introduced the legislation in the attempt to satirize current laws and shed light on the gap between reproductive health care regulations for men and women

Under Texas state law, women who want to get abortions are issued a pamphlet called "A Woman's Right to Know" and forced to take a transvaginal ultrasound before the procedure.

Some of the bill's other provisions include similar guidelines, such as a required rectal exam.

There's even a rule stating that "masturbatory emissions" be stored "for the wife for conception."

Farrar, who is an outspoken advocate of abortion rights, ultimately labels masturbation as an "act against an unborn child" that fails "to preserve the sanctity of life." She proposes that men be fined $100 if they're caught pleasuring themselves.

"What I would like to see is this make people stop and think," Farrar told The Texas Tribune. "Maybe my colleagues aren't capable of that, but the people who voted for them, or the people that didn't vote at all, I hope that it changes their mind and helps them to decide what the priorities are."

Republican lawmakers criticized the "Man's Right to Know Act" after it was filed last week.

"I'm embarrassed for Representative Farrar," Rep. Tony Tinderholt, of Arlington, told the Tribune.

"Her attempt to compare [HB 4260] to the abortion issue shows a lack of a basic understanding of human biology," he said. "I would recommend that she consider taking a high school biology class from a local public or charter school before filing another bill on the matter."

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Equality California marching for equal rights. (Photo by Derek Wear of Unikorn Photography)

LA Pride Parade to be Replaced by Protest March

With West Hollywood Park construction reducing the space available for the annual pride festival and a protest march replacing the pride parade, this year's LA Pride in June may prove to be a vastly different experience from recent years.

That was the message coming out of a community meeting on Wednesday night where leaders of the Resist March and Christopher Street West (CSW), the group that produces LA Pride, discussed this year's pride events.

"We're doing everything we can to make sure that the people who come to the city, sometimes only once or twice a year, are going to see something familiar [at the pride festival]," reported CSW board president Chris Classen, conceding that accomplishing that goal was proving challenging.

The Pride Festival will be a ticketed event, as always (likely $20 per day), scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, June 10-11 in West Hollywood Park, plus a free transgender event and Sizzle sober area on Friday, June 9. However, the entire festival will have to be downsized as a three-year construction project that began in January has closed off a significant portion of the park.

CSW is losing almost 70 percent of the "footprint" it had available in 2016, Classen reported. Consequently, only West Hollywood Park's great lawn and the auditorium, plus San Vicente Boulevard between Melrose Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard, are currently available for this year's Pride Festival.

Officials with the City of West Hollywood are negotiating on behalf of CSW to see if part of the Pacific Design Center lot and/or the adjacent Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) lot can be used for the pride festival. CSW hopes to have a final answer about the available footprint following the April 3 City Council meeting when LA Pride will next be on the agenda.

As a result of this uncertainty, CSW currently does not know how many entertainment stages it will have. It may only be able to accommodate one stage (last year they had three) and consequently has not been able to begin booking talent.

"I'm not happy that we're this late in the process. We're 90 days away [from the festival] and I don't know where we're putting things, but we're going to get there," Classen assured the two dozen people attending the meeting. He added they expect to use more DJs and less live talent this year.

While the 2016 event was branded as a "music festival" due to the large number of musical acts performing, this year's will not have that branding.

Meanwhile, the annual pride parade has been canceled, ceding to the nationwide LGBT Resist March that is scheduled in many U.S. cities for Sunday, June 11, the day the Los Angeles pride parade would normally occur.

Similar to the giant Women's March that took place in dozens of cities across America on Jan. 21, the Resist March in Los Angeles will step off from Hollywood and Highland, since there is a subway station there allowing participants to arrive by mass transit. The march will follow a 3.1 mile path down La Brea Avenue, turning onto Santa Monica Boulevard and ending at San Vicente Boulevard, the entrance to the Pride festival.

With a quarter-million to a half-million people expected to participate in the march, John Erickson, a Resist March committee member, said they expect to have several simultaneous smaller marches in surrounding areas that feed into the larger march going down Santa Monica Boulevard. Resist March committee member Paul Katami reported they will figure out a way to provide transportation back to Hollywood and Highland from San Vicente Boulevard.

'Coming Out' as Conservatives cont'd from pg. 1

Transgender conservative activists Jennifer Williams, left, and Jordan Evans, right, at February's CPAC, Conservative Political Action Conference. Photo by Jean-Claude Michel

Why would two transgender women attend a Conservative political conference?

Transgender Conservative activists Jennifer Williams and Jordan Evans caused a stir when last February they attended CPAC, the Conservative Political Action Conference. The annual event has been home to Ronald Reagan, Sarah Palin, and President Donald Trump.

CPAC's web site hails itself as the "birthplace of modern conservatism" and the conference as an "Activism Boot Camp".

Williams became a Conservative "because of Jimmy Carter and the Iran Hostage Crisis," she says.

At the time, Russia's Afghanistan invasion, high inflation and interest rates, and long gas lines she saw as a kid also changed her politics. "I was in school during the Reagan years, very good ones for our country overall," she said. "Since then, I have seen the growth of an already too big government and much too interventionist foreign policy."

Today Williams believes in "small government, local control, more freedom to make choices, and in equalization of opportunity, not equalization of outcome." She's Gen X, remembers RUN-DMC and U2, Frank Sinatra, and she's taken her kids to see the Rolling Stones, Springsteen and Paul McCartney. She has an MBA in Marketing and Finance.

Evans says she's a "firm believer of individual rights and the ability to live your life as you choose, so long as you don't put others at risk." She also believes in government transparency and thinks "localities know what issues matter the most to them and how to best handle issues." Evans finds "the rule of law to be very important in maintaining a fair and just society."

Williams said she was surprised at how well she was received at CPAC.

"We did get a few looks from some people, mainly males over 45 or so. Plenty of women gave us smiles, thumbs-up and even hugs," Williams says. Millennial Conservatives slapped high fives on them, asked for selfies, and were full of questions she points out.

Evans thinks "a strong defense is vital for the well-being of our nation" yet is "skeptical of taking it upon ourselves to police the world." She believes "immigration is actually a boon for our country and that responsible vetting is more productive than isolating ourselves from the world".

Regarding transgender and related issues, Evans "trust individuals to know their own bodies best, so long as what they do doesn't harm other individuals."

Evans thinks reducing the transgender issue "to only a bathroom issue is a ruse. "It dehumanizes the transgender community by minimizing the struggles we experience trying to live with dignity, respect, and safety.

Evans differs from Roberts on if the transgender community "overreacted" to the current state of affairs.

"Absolutely not," Evans says. "The LGBTQIA+ community is extremely anxious and uneasy over the actions of our administration and for good reason. Many Trump administration figures have long histories of stances condoning transgender discrimination," she says. "That opens us up to violence."

Williams is "taking this challenge on because I am of two tribes - LGBTQ and Republican/Conservative." She wants to "build bridges between the two communities, get past fear and ugliness and to be an example that both sides are worth taking a chance on."

One lesson Williams learned from her RNC Convention experience was to advertise with a sign that I said she is Conservative and transgender. "I am one of you," she concluded.

Historical Background:

When Men Who Lived as Women Were Drag Queens

By Frank Pizzoli

Historically, the quest for LGBT civil rights is called "The Movement."

Marsha P. Johnson, born Malcolm Michaels. Jr. (1945-1992)

Stonewall, the birthing moment of our liberation, along with other West Coast resistances, was lead by drag queens (back then, that's we called men who lived as women). For example, Marsha P. Johnson (1945-1992), Stonewall Riot veteran and the subject of a film that screened at April's Tribeca Film Festival, was a popular figure in New York City's gay and art scene from the 1960s through the 1990s. Later in life Johnson became an AIDS activist with ACT UP.

Many older activists were also involved in the anti-Viet Nam War protests. Bayard Rustin was influential, if hidden, in the Black Civil Rights Movement of Martin Luther King's day. A Black Congressman threatened King with false rumors of a love relationship if he insisted on a public role for Rustin.

With Intersectionality all the rage, funny that's where Rustin met his longtime companion Walter Naegle, at a NYC intersection.

"I was waiting for the light to change at a New York City intersection. We just started talking," Naegle told *Central Voice* in 2013, when I interviewed him in celebration of the 50th anniversary of King's March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Rustin's advice to King may serve as advice to the LGBT movement. He told King upon being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "you must speak your conscience".

Pulse Victims Receive $8.5 Million in Damages

By Central Voice

The victims of a mass shooting at a Florida nightclub in June 2016 will receive nearly $8.5 million for emotional and financial support for victims' families, those wounded in the attack and responders, the U.S. Department of Justice announced. On June 12, 2016, Omar Mateen, a 29-year-old security guard, killed 49 people and wounded 53 others in a shooting spree inside Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida. Similar funding was provided to help victims in other mass shootings in recent years, including in San Bernardino, California, and Charleston, and South Carolina.

Analysis: IX Degrees of Separation

Revoking Title IX directives means the use of sex-segregated facilities like bathrooms and locker rooms based on gender identity will be left to the states and their local school districts to determine.

By Christopher Thomas
Special to
Central Voice

On Feb. 22, 2017 the Trump administration sent it's first, clear message on trans rights by way of a three-page letter.

The notice, sent jointly by the Department of Justice and the Department of Education - now led by Attorney General Jeff Session and Secretary Betsy DeVos (respectively), effectively revoked two major directives on trans-related policy for students in schools receiving federal funding - which is most public and private institutions.

In that letter, the current administration revoked Title IX directives from the previous administration, which clarified gender identity as a protected classification against sex based discrimination. That included the use of sex-segregated facilities like bathrooms and locker rooms based on gender identity, leaving the issue to the states and their local school districts.

Less than two weeks later, on March 6, the Supreme Court reversed its decision to hear a critical case on this matter and sent it back to the 4th Circuit Court in light of the new guidance from the federal government.

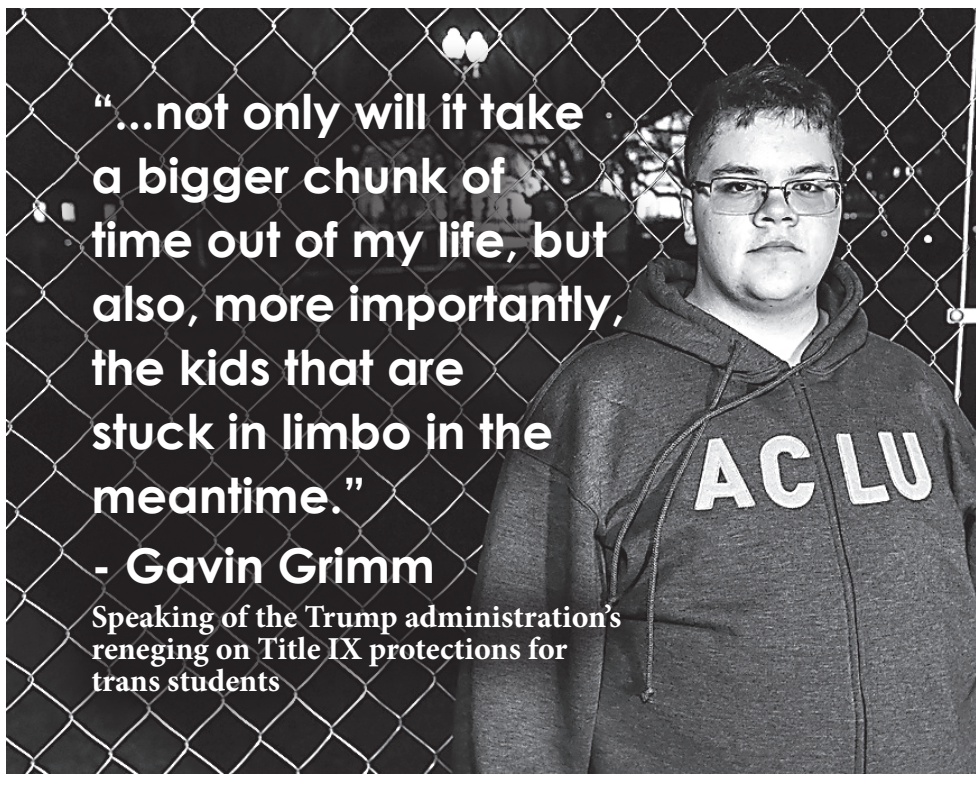
This leaves trans students across the nation in a state of social and political uncertainty.

Formed in a Certain Crucible

Gloucester County, Virginia. It's a sparsely populated part of the Commonwealth's coast where you're more likely to see daffodils than people (it's home to an annual festival celebrating the flower).

This is the place from which Gavin Grimm hails.

Grimm, a senior in his county's only high school, came out as transgender when he was 12 and when he started high school, he notified his principal that he identified as male. He was allowed to use bathrooms that corresponded with his gender identity.


"...not only will it take a bigger chunk of time out of my life, but also, more importantly, the kids that are stuck in limbo in the meantime."
- Gavin Grimm
Speaking of the Trump administration's reneging on Title IX protections for trans students
ACLU

Grimm contends that he used these facilities without incident. Testimony from some members of the Gloucester County community during a 3-hour-long Board of Education meeting on Dec. 9, 2014 painted a different picture - so much so, it seems, that the school board voted 6-1 to approve a resolution, stating all students must use facilities based on their designated sex.

In a recent interview published in *Mother Jones*, Grimm sheds some light on his surroundings, calling Gloucester County "intensely conservative" (the county voted in favor of Donald Trump by a 2-to-1 margin in November and is part of Virginia's 1st Congressional District, represented by Congressman Robert Wittman, who holds a socially conservative line on LGBTQIA+ issues). Some letters to the editor of the Gloucester *Gazette-Journal* mirror this attitude. One in particular, published Feb. 15, was particularly scathing - in which the sender used feminine pronouns to describe Grimm, stating he's "anything but typical," and "allowing persons to use facilities that are not for your God-given gender is wrong."

Hopeful Start

But on the other hand, letters supporting Grimm were also published by the paper (one dated Sept. 14 called him "The Kid with Remarkable Courage") and as 2016 began, Grimm's cause received written endorsements from federal judges and the federal government.

In April 2016, he was on the winning side of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court's 2-1 decision, which overturned a lower court's decision in favor of the Gloucester County School Board. The higher court based their decision on a 2015 letter from the U.S. Department of Education, directing Title IX enforcement to include gender identity and whenever sex-segregation is necessary "a school generally must treat transgender students consistent with their gender identity."

Less than a month following the Fourth Circuit Court's ruling, a letter from the White House (by way of the Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice) doubled down on the earlier directive, stating schools were in jeopardy of losing federal funding if they did not accommodate students' needs based on their gender identity.

This was a major blow to "bathroom bill" advocates, who had scored their first victory in North Carolina with the law known as "House Bill 2" earlier that year. By summer vacation, Supreme Court showdown seemed inevitable.

Then U.S. Judge Reed O'Connor stepped in.

Undone

Soon after the White House directive was sent, a coalition of states filed a lawsuit, requesting it be blocked. Texas-based Judge O'Connor ruled in favor of the states on Aug. 22, stating everyone involved in the suit "must maintain the status quo" until further action is taken by a higher court.

Up until March 6, that still seemed to be the Highest Court in the Land. But the Trump Administration's directive to withdraw the Obama Administration's directions made the court reconsider, sending it back down to the Fourth Circuit because it ruled in favor of Grimm based primarily on directives that have been nullified.

Regardless of the court's decision, this will still likely make its way to the Supreme Court - just not anytime soon and with unclear prospects since the appointment of conservative judge Neil Gorsuch is probably a matter of "when" not "if."

As Grimm told *Mother Jones*: "not only will it take a bigger chunk of time out of my life, but also, more importantly, the kids that are stuck in limbo in the meantime."

Implications

The Feb. 22 memo sent by the current administration now paves the way for states to pass their own "bathroom bills." As this year began, even in advance of President Trump's inauguration, a rush of these bills were filed in state legislative bodies - including Virginia (though that bill was dead on arrival).

The one closest to the Governor's desk is Senate Bill 6 in Texas - a bill that borrows heavily from North Carolina's House Bill 2 and even builds on it, including enforcement procedures and penalties (fines up to $1,500 for a first violation and $10,000 after each subsequent violation).

The Trump administration's reneging on Title IX protections for trans students comes from a time honored chapter of the conservative playbook: evoking the 10th Amendment to maintain the "status quo." A student's state of residence, zip code, and elected representative plays a none-too-small role in level of protection they have under the law and the amount of safety and acceptance they enjoy outside of it.

The White House's directive also comes at a time when recognition of the community is on the rise but anti-trans violence still remains high. According to a University of California, Berkeley study published in February, transgender and genderfluid teens face up to three times as much physical and emotional abuse at home and at school than their cisgender peers, with transgender girls facing the highest rates of cyberbullying and genderfluid teenagers (assigned male at birth) facing the highest rates of sexual assault. This for a community already facing disproportionately high rates of homelessness, drug addiction, and suicide.

This for a community that was at the vanguard of the Gay Liberation Movement in the late 1960s and 1970s.

With the end of gender identity protected under Title IX, the Trump administration has made their trans policy abundantly clear through the Department of Education and Justice. That policy is one of silence and it seems they expect trans students to follow suit.

Local Reaction:

Transgender School Guidelines Rescinded

By Central Voice

President Donald Trump thinks each state should decide on bathroom policies for transgender people, although at the White House he's decided that an "All-Gender Restroom" is fine by him.

Trump will keep the gender-neutral policy established in 2015 by the Obama Administration despite reversing an Obama policy that said people should be able to use the bathroom of the gender with which they identify.

Local reaction to Trump's moves…

"I think the latest transgender developments show us the importance of people in the community standing up alongside these children and families," says transgender Nicole M , mom of 3 , and TransCentralPA board member.

She encourages people to educate themselves.

"We must bring about awareness to those that clearly do not understand," she says.

"Whether guidelines on a national level or state level are in place or not , the individual school districts should be knowledgeable and supportive in creating safe and inclusive schools," Nicole says.

Julie Berry's initial reaction to the Trump administration's rescinding of transgender student protections was a "not surprised" followed by a flood of anger. She also serves on the TransCenteal PA board.

For months, Berry says, "we witnessed a presidential campaign built on bigotry and misogyny that advocated hate and violence toward anyone who is not a white Christian male." What we are seeing now, she says, "is those words put into action".

The best solution for transgender people "is to stay visible and heard," Berry says.

Dr. Rachel L. Levine, Pennsylvania Physician General, and a pediatrician and adolescent medicine specialist, said "The medical literature is clear that transgender and gender expansive youth that are raised in a supportive and nurturing environment at home and at school do very well. Transgender and gender expansive youth that face resistance at home and bullying and harassment at school have greater mental health problems including substance use, depression and suicide."

Equality Pennsylvania Executive Director, Ted Martin, spoke out against the Trump administration after the administration rescinded the guidelines.

"With the statement from the Justice Department, the Trump administration is sending a message to transgender kids that the President of the United States doesn't have their backs. Every student should be treated fairly and equally under the law, and protecting transgender students helps ensure that they have the same opportunity as their classmates to fully participate in school," Martin says.

The Trump administration's decision to rescind this guidance has no impact on schools that are already doing the right thing in line with this guidance – they can, should, and will continue to protect transgender students.

That's why revoking this guidance is indicative of the administration's disregard for transgender youth and the many challenges they face. While it may not have a legal impact, it sends an alarming messaging that bullying and harassment are ok.

This attempted rollback of transgender students' protections is exactly what we feared when Betsy DeVos was nominated, which is why Equality Pennsylvania opposed her nomination.

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center executive director Adrian Shanker asked "every school district superintendent and school principal in the Lehigh Valley to ensure that transgender students in their care are treated with dignity and respect, offered equal and safe learning environments, and are provided with access to restroom and locker room facilities in accordance with their gender identity."

National advocate GLSEN reports that:

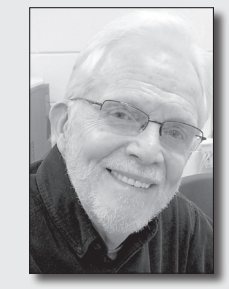
More than 18 million students attend public K-12 schools within the 12 states and District of Columbia that have LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination statutes.

More than 19 million students attend public K-12 schools within the 14 states and District of Columbia that have LGBT- OR LGB-inclusive nondiscrimination statutes.

Nearly 22 million students attend public K-12 schools within the 18 states and District of Columbia that have LGBT-inclusive anti-bullying statutes.

Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons
Harrisburg Area Community College



Tell Me the Truth

When you read *Central Voice* do you ever wonder if we are telling the truth in our stories and columns? I'm sure many of you do; perhaps most of you do at least some of the time.

And it's not surprising that this might be true, for journalism has always had to fight the perception that it is full of half-truths and lies, that it will print anything as long as it sells papers or attracts viewers.

In the President Donald Trump era, truth and journalism have taken a hit like no other in recent memory. We now live in an era where millions of folks see "fake news" everywhere, thanks to Trump and his infamous tweets.

…millions of folks see "fake news" everywhere…

We are in real trouble when a president can tell the country that something is true simply because he says it is, even if he has nothing to back it up. Even if he is found to be totally wrong. And his supporters believe him anyway or simply pretend that it's no big deal. The rest of us are trying to figure out how to counter this trend.

When I became caught up in the struggle for social justice back in the day I also became more and more concerned about how to discern the truth. And as I was in grad school at a major university I was reading and studying the great authors who wrote eloquently about the problem.

Taking classes in Shakespeare was a wonderful study in truth-telling. Shakespeare was always writing about the disjunction between appearance and reality; to this day I remember the line from Twelfth Night "cucullus non facit monachum," or "the cowl does not make the monk."

That line was said by one of Shakespeare's wonderful fools, who were of course very bright and thoughtful men who played the fool to tell truths that might upset the king and courtiers around them.

And then there was Ralph Waldo Emerson: "The world is his who can see through its pretension." And Henry David Thoreau: "Say what you have to say, not what you ought. Any truth is better than make believe."

Perhaps I digress but I'm trying to make a point. The best practitioners of journalism have always tried to tell the truth. We enjoy a free press, and if journalists are found to be deliberately not telling the truth they pay a stiff price for it.

We enjoy a free press because without one we do not live in a true democracy. Yes, it was Thomas Jefferson who wrote that if he had to choose between a government without the press or a press without a government, he would choose the latter. People in a democracy need to be informed, he said, or there was no point to it. Back in 1947 the authors of an academic report argued that journalists are most useful when they give a "truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context that gives them meaning."

"It is no longer enough to report fact truthfully," they wrote. "It is now necessary to report the truth about the fact."

I agree, and I believe thinking about truth and context is terribly important. When someone says you can't trust the media or that a media outlet is printing so-called fake news, let's take it in context.

Context is another word to write about in a future column. For now let me say that all words always appear in a context, and if we don't understand context we probably understand nothing.

So here we are in context. This is a column in Central Voice, a bi-monthly publication in which we are trying our best to write important truths about and for people along the LGBTQ spectrum and their allies.

Tons of media outlets today are also trying to get at the truth surrounding LGBTQ issues, and overall, the American press has made great strides in this regard. Of course, many media outlets have sought to undermine these truths, so it is the reader's and viewer's duty to become educated about truth and context.

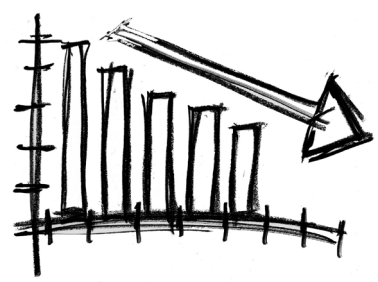
I love reading *Central Voice*, and I hope you do too. There is so much good stuff here that you need to know.

As for this column, I do my best to write the truth as I see it. This doesn't mean you have to agree with me, and who knows if I always tell it like it is? Telling the truth these days is a tough business.

QUICK FACTS:

PA's DECLINING POPULATION

(2015 to 2016)



7,677
Pennsylvania lost more than 7,000 residents in 2016.

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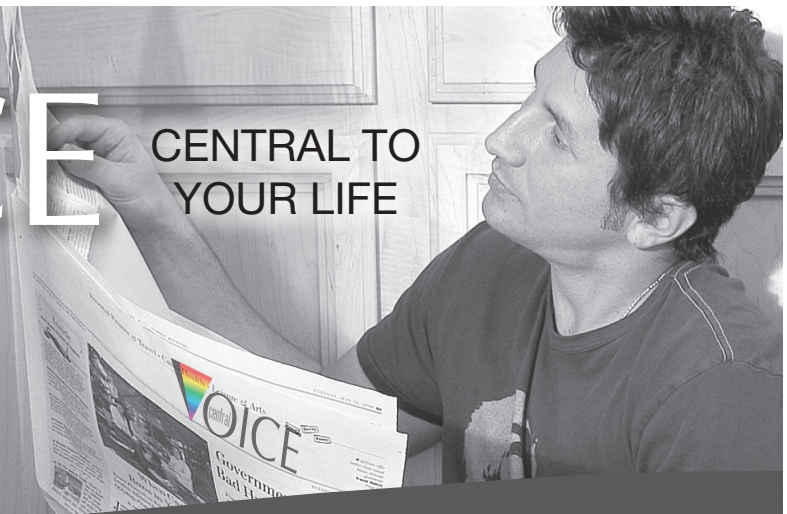

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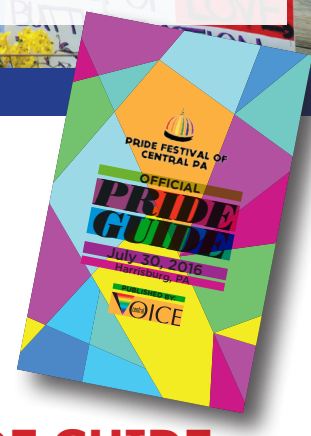

CENTRAL PA PRIDE GUIDE:

Guide booklets are inserted in July/Aug CV and also distributed to each festival attendee on July 29

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PRIDE FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL PA

Full Page (5.25" x 8.5")
Half Page (5.25" x 4.25")
Quarter Page (2.5" x 4.25")

SPACE RESERVATION: **May 26**
COPY DEADLINE: **June 2**

YORK EQUALITY FEST GUIDE:

Guide appears in July/Aug. edition of CV and also distributed to festival attendees. **York Equality Fest: August 6**

SPACE RESERVATION DEADLINE: **May 26**
COPY DEADLINE: **June 2**

CENTRAL VOICE PRIDE GUIDES are published in association with Pride organizers and will contain all the vital information festival-goers want such as the festival map, vendor listing and entertainment schedules.

central VOICE

Contact Dave Brown
davebrown@pressandjournal.com
717-944-4628

TransCentralPA Topics

By Joanne Carroll
president of TransCentralPA

Success Is Measured in More Ways Than One

They say that records are made to be broken, but we TransCentralPA are discovering that you can become a victim of your own success. If you are sticking people into a phone booth, there has to be an ultimate limit to the number that will fit inside. The Keystone Conference puts people into a hotel for several days, and we are discovering that we may have reached our maximum capacity.

In 2016, we had an attendance of 700 and we thought that has to be the limit, certainly we cannot add one more person. Well this year, 2017, attendance at the Keystone Conference swelled to 750 and we served 400 at our closing banquet. WOW! (We grew exponentially every year for the past nine years so the likelihood is that we could easily exceed 750 in 2018.)

Success like that is only possible through the efforts of many people, and our convention is certainly a demonstration of that fact. Our Board of Directors and our membership stepped up to meet the challenges of providing the human power needed for any number of positions.

We also were successful due to our many sponsors and financial partners. One organization that has become a huge friend, supporter and ally of this conference is the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. They support us with advertising dollars and they show up and participate with us, and we are grateful for these and too many more friends to name here.

We have already contracted with the Sheraton Harrisburg/Hershey for 2018 for the dates of March 6-11, 2018, and I worry that we will be able to accommodate the guests that attend then. We used three overflow hotels, but we can only do so much in the meeting space at the Sheraton. We can only accommodate 84 workshops and we already turn away around half that many each year.

Perhaps the answer is that event is by pre-registration only, but then what do we do with the traditional walk-ins. We certainly have no desire to turn anyone away, because with a mission of providing caring support for the trans-community, we are obligated to accommodate everyone.

Oh sure, we could try to find another location, but the staff and management at the Sheraton are like family to us. In the nine years of this conference, not one employee has ever called in sick. We love them and they love us.

So, if anyone has any ideas what we do if the number swells again, we are open to suggestions.

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TRANSGENDER SUPPORT
LANCASTER GROUP:
Grace United Church of Christ, 7:30 pm,
2nd Friday. Call Ellen: (717) 413-1275
YORK GROUP:
Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, 7:30 pm,
4th Saturday. Call Krystyna: (717) 792-0927

80% OF LGBT CONSUMERS AGREED THEY WERE MORE LIKELY TO BUY FROM LGBT-FRIENDLY COMPANIES

It's time to diversify!
Contact Dave Brown
Central Voice Sales Manager
717-944-4628
davebrown@pressandjournal.com

Sick? Weekend? No Doctor?

No problem!

Life doesn't always go according to plan. If you can't get in to see your regular doctor, see us. **PinnacleHealth FastCare** clinics and **PinnacleHealth Express** can provide fast, convenient, walk-in services to patients ages 18 months and older. No appointments are needed—just walk in!

- + Coughs, colds, flu
- + Sore throat
- + Sinus infections
- + Removal of stitches or sutures
- + Pregnancy testing
- + Ear pain
- + Skin rashes (poison ivy, etc.)
- + Other minor conditions

Five convenient locations:

PinnacleHealth Express Union Deposit
805 Sir Thomas Court, 2nd Floor, Harrisburg
(717) 782-5905

PinnacleHealth Express Lemoyne
3 West Walnut Street, 2nd Floor, Suite 205
(717) 988-9683

PinnacleHealth Express Annville
1251 East Main Street
(717) 988-0531

PinnacleHealth FastCare Camp Hill
Inside Giant, 3301 Trindle Road
(844) 640-FAST (3278)

PinnacleHealth FastCare Enola
Inside Giant, 4510 Marketplace Way
(844) 640-FAST (3278)

Most insurances accepted. Please call your insurance provider with questions.

Hours:

Monday-Saturday
9 a.m.-9 p.m.
(FastCare closed 2-3 p.m.)

Sunday
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Holidays
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
(closed Christmas Day and Easter Sunday)

PinnacleHealth Medical Group now offers a **Nurse Advice Line** for its patients. Call **866-9-NURSE1** (866-968-7731) 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and talk to a nurse who will direct you to the right care when you need it.

express PinnacleHealth
pinnaclehealth.org/express

PINNACLEHEALTH FASTCARE
pinnaclehealth.org/fastcare